INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

An Exploration into Inspiration in Heritage Interpretation through Virtual World Cafe

by

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ABSTRACT

Inspiration in heritage interpretation was explored as an alternative to the traditional instrumental knowledge-based approach used in the field. Thirty-three professional interpreters from 21 agencies across North America participated in dialogue through Internet-based World Café focus groups, an emerging research method that was assessed through the inquiry. Literature and dialogue reviews revealed nine characteristics of inspiration, including the dissection of inspiration into inspired by and inspired to: inspiration is contagious, positive, individual, transcendent, unexpected, and holistic; and requires receptivity, which may be cultivated. Participants felt that inspiration is the goal of interpretation and 10 factors for inspiration-based interpretation emerged. The role of provocation and the ability of interpreters to meet their agencies’ requirements, particularly the need for measurement, were discussed. Agencies’ and visitors’ needs may be met through heritage interpretation aimed at the cognitive, affective and conative domains, which may result in meaningful connections between visitors and place.
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Marina Mae Boyle (1936-2012). She was thrilled to have my Master’s thesis dedicated to her, and I know she would be equally thrilled with this dedication and the completion of this document. Thank you Mom, for starting me on my journey of lifelong learning.

I would like to add an additional special dedication to my husband of 32 years, Neil Gilson. You’ve been with me every step of this journey. Thank you for your patience, love and inspiration. I know it’s a cliché, but I really couldn’t have done it without you.
Chapter One: Introduction

As a long-time professional in the heritage interpretation (HI) field and a doctoral candidate, I was interested in exploring how my profession could move beyond its instrumental knowledge-based approach, as recommended by some HI scholars (Ablett & Dyer, 2009; Silberman, 2013; Staiff, 2014; Uzzell & Ballantyne, 1998). Although humans have undertaken to interpret their heritage for thousands of years, the field of HI in North America began officially approximately 100 years ago as an initiative driven by agencies including the U.S. National Park Service and Parks Canada (Butler, 2009). HI is generally seen to be an educational or communication process that seeks to reveal meanings and connect people to places and objects of natural and cultural significance, e.g., at parks, museums, zoos and other sites (Beck & Cable, 2011; Mills, 2001; Tilden, 1977). Over the last century the various goals for HI have included connecting people to places and objects of significance, revealing meanings, conveying agency missions and fostering behaviour changes, encouraging environmental literacy, and meeting tourism objectives, to name a few (Benton, 2009, 2011).

In seeking to achieve these goals, an education-based approach has been used in HI (Ablett & Dyer, 2009; Silberman, 2013). Within this education-based approach the HI field has been dominated by the liberal and behaviourist traditions, in which humans are seen to be rational beings and empty vessels, who may be programmed to change behaviours, which may then be measured (Elias & Merriam, 1995; Walter, 2009). This instrumental approach to HI perceives knowledge as mastering bits of information for specific usable ends (Fairfield, 2009) and in HI it is typically assumed that participants engage in HI to learn, that learning will lead to
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attitude and behaviour changes, and that goal success will be achieved if the information is presented in an organized and thematic manner (T. J. Brown, Ham, & Hughes, 2010; Ham, 2009, 2013; Powell & Ham, 2008; Silberman, 2013). The instrumental education-based approach to HI often fails to consider that information is not value-free or neutral (Barry, 2007; Mezirow, 2003), heritage is complex and contested (J. G. Smith, 1999; Staiff, Bushell, & Kennedy, 2002; Wong, 2013) and behaviour change is multifaceted and complex, e.g., having information about a place does not necessarily lead to action to protect the place (Henderson, 2004; Vaske & Kobrin, 2001). Lastly, the education and information-based approach to HI fails to account for what the visitor brings with them in terms of prior knowledge, background and experiences, and their goals for involvement in HI.

Visitation to sites that offer HI indicates that people are interested in heritage places and objects of significance; however, as Staiff (2014) noted, the profession’s focus on providing information produces a “consensus discourse” that fails to consider the meaning-making of the visitor; he suggested that HI is ripe for conceptual examination, starting with an exploration into the visitor experience. Taking a more visitor-oriented approach has been recommended by scholars within HI (Ballantyne, Packer, Hughes, & Dierking, 2007; Ballantyne & Packer, 2009; Beck & Cable, 2011; P. Davidson & Black, 2007; Ingham, 2000; Mitchell, 2005), including suggestions for reaching out to visitors at the affective and conative domains, as well as the cognitive domain (Ballantyne, Packer, & Falk, 2011; Ballantyne et al., 2007; Beck & Cable, 2011; P. Davidson & Black, 2007; Hughes, 2012; Hunter, 2012b; Ingham, 2000; Knapp & Forist, 2014; Martin, 2011; Mitchell, 2005; Wijeratne, Van Dijk, Kirk-Brown, & Frost, 2014). A
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conceptual framework that gives increased consideration to the participants as holistic beings, i.e., with attention given to the head, heart and hands, could be valuable to the profession of HI.

The concept of inspiration may provide such a framework. I believe the notion of inspiration hovers quietly in the middle of the field of HI like a tethered hot air balloon. It is connected to the field and pointed to; however, it has not been the focus of any inquiry within HI. Inspiration is “breathing in or infusion of some idea, purpose, etc., into the mind; the suggestion, awakening, or creation of some feeling or impulse, especially of an exalted kind” (Oxford University Press, 2000). The word inspiration is used regularly within everyday contexts and it is increasingly investigated within the field of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), resulting in a growing body of literature on the concept (Hart, 1993, 1998; Jennings, 2012; Thrash, Elliot, Maruskin, & Cassidy, 2010; Thrash & Elliot, 2003, 2004; Thrash, Maruskin, Cassidy, Fryer, & Ryan, 2010). As a psychological construct inspiration places emphasis on individuals; gives consideration to triggers and targets; is positive, transcendent, unexpected, holistic, and transmissible; and requires receptivity, which may be cultivated (Hart, 1993, 1998; Thrash & Elliot, 2003, 2004). Giving consideration to the characteristics of inspiration within the HI context could provide useful insights for the field and I elected to explore the synergy between the two as my topic of research.

Since my area of inquiry was relevant to the occupation of HI, I invited professional heritage interpreters from across North America to investigate the role of inspiration in HI through dialogue using the new research method of World Café (WC) in an online format. WC is a dialogue-oriented focus group method for encouraging “conversations that matter” and was
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created in 1995 by Juanita Brown and David Isaacs (2005). It has been used by tens of thousands of people around the world (J. Brown & Isaacs, 2005) and is supported by a community of practice at http://www.theworldcafecommunity.org. WC has appeared in theses and dissertations, e.g., Keller (2014) and Polite-Wilson (2014), although my work appears to be the first time that virtual WC (VWC) has been used in a dissertation. Through VWC, 33 interpreters from 21 different agencies explored how an inspiration-focus could contribute to holistic HI, i.e., interpretation that is oriented towards individuals, and aimed at reaching people at the level of their heads, hearts and hands, and therefore, includes information, emotion and action.

Research Questions

In order to explore the topic of inspiration in HI, the primary guiding research question was “what could inspiration contribute to holistic heritage interpretation?”

The sub-questions for the study were:

1) a. What does the concept of inspiration mean to North American heritage interpretive program managers, supervisors and front line interpreters?

   b. What are some of the narratives of experiences of inspiration as told by North American interpretive program managers, supervisors and front line interpreters?

   c. What do North American heritage interpretive program managers, supervisors and front line interpreters think the concept of inspiration could contribute to heritage interpretation?

2) What would be the attributes of inspiration-based interpretation?

3) a. What are the barriers to implementing inspiration-based interpretation?
b. What are the bridges to implementing inspiration-based interpretation?

4) What could virtual World Cafe contribute to research methodology?

Context of the Inquiry

The inquiry centred on a topic of interest to the profession of HI and not to any one particular site, although participants were encouraged to share site-specific examples. The discussions were mainly focused on personal interpretation, i.e., in which an interpreter is present, although a few references to non-personal interpretation, e.g., signs, brochures and exhibits, were made by participants. The research focused on HI in the North American context. It was beyond the scope of this study to address HI specifically for children, although a few participants did reference situations involving children as audience. While this inquiry reflected the personal stories and thoughts of the participants and cannot be generalized to the broader profession of HI, it is my hope that the results are of interest to the field and provide food for thought for continued dialogue and further research into the topic of the role of inspiration in HI.

Exploring the use of WC in an online format as a research method was also an important component of the study, and I hope that the findings will provide useful insights for other researchers considering using this new research method.

Theoretical Frameworks

I based my research on two theoretical frameworks. First, within the HI field, I focused on literature that suggested new perspectives and encouraged visitor-oriented approaches, as well as alternative standpoints towards HI. Secondly, while exploring the concept of inspiration, I focused on the secular theory from the psychology field, and did not delve into religious or
philosophical inspiration literature in any detail. The study was exploratory in nature and therefore the qualitative research methodology was suitable.

**Overview of the Research**

The research methods used in this study consisted of WC in an online format, referred to as virtual World Café (VWC), and an online action-reflection-reporting phase, facilitated via LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com). Two VWC sessions took place in May 2014 and the concluding VWC forum took place in September of 2014, with timing that was planned to reach interpretive staff prior to and after the busy summer months. In between VWC sessions the participants were encouraged to test out ideas that emerged from the first forum, reflect on the findings and report on these throughout the summer via a private LinkedIn group. The online venue was chosen as a means to include HI professionals from across North America and from across a variety of settings with minimal expense to the researcher and participants. North America was chosen as a geographic zone for ease of communication in English and minimal time zone differences.

As mentioned, 33 front line interpreters, supervisors and program managers from the natural and cultural HI fields within 21 different agencies engaged in the dialogue on the role of inspiration in HI. Overall, the split between Canadians (from British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Prince Edward Island) and Americans (from Colorado, Texas, Nevada, Ohio, Kentucky, North Carolina, North Dakota, Kansas and California) was almost even, with 51.5% Canadians and 48.5% Americans involved in the study.
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As noted, this project marked the first known use of the WC in an online format for a dissertation, and I have presented and analyzed the use of this research method in Chapters Three and Five.

Significance of the Inquiry

This research is of significance to three areas of inquiry. First, within the HI field this work may contribute to ongoing dialogue on the goals of the profession and the proposed need to re-imagine HI (Staiff, 2014). It may also provide useful input for practitioners related to visitor-oriented strategic planning, training, and program development and delivery. The study aimed to explore ways in which inspiration could be used to guide HI in practice as a means to help broaden the field beyond its current information-oriented approach. Focusing on this topic may provide useful insights for ways to appeal to and reach today’s experience-oriented audiences, an issue with which HI-based organizations struggle. The topic has relevance to organizations wishing to offer meaningful experiences for their visitors, as well as to interpretive program managers, supervisors and front line interpreters grappling with how to remain viable in today’s realities.

Secondly, the research may contribute to the growing field of positive psychology, specifically the study of inspiration as a construct. I have examined inspiration within the HI profession and this context may contribute useful insights to the growing field of study into inspiration. The qualitative nature of the study may also provide a fresh perspective for ways to explore the concept of inspiration.
Lastly, the study may contribute to the methodological literature focused on the use of the internet for research, and more specifically, on the use of WC in an online format.

Assumptions

This study was based on a few assumptions. The first assumption I made was that an exploration into the topic of inspiration in HI was worthwhile, since inspiration is referred to in the HI field, yet had never been investigated. I also assumed that dialogue between HI professionals was a sound starting point for exploration into the topic. I felt that bringing together professionals from across North America for dialogue would be valuable to all, and this led me to use an online forum. Because tools for engaging in dialogue via the internet existed, I assumed that this venue would offer opportunity for success, and that the use of WC in an online setting would be worth exploring as a research method. Despite the challenges with the online venue, it proved to be a successful method that is worthy of future consideration.

Regarding the participants, I assumed that they would be open to potentially new perspectives and willing to freely dialogue on the topic, and that they would act with integrity and treat each other with respect. The participants were wonderfully supportive of each other, built on each other’s ideas and seemed to enjoy being involved. I also assumed that once participants agreed to be involved they would take their involvement seriously and devote the necessary time and energy to the project. In retrospect, it seemed that I asked for too much of the participants’ time and only four of the 33 were involved in all three phases of the research project.

Study limitations and delimitations have been addressed in Chapter Three.
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Definitions

The definition for inspiration that I have used as a base is from the Oxford Online Dictionary (2000) “breathing in or infusion of some idea, purpose, etc., into the mind; the suggestion, awakening, or creation of some feeling or impulse, especially of an exalted kind.”

Cultural heritage (Shalaginova, 2012, p. 5) was defined in 1972 by UNESCO as “monuments, groups of buildings and sites”, whereas natural heritage was defined as “natural features, geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas and natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas.” In recognition of the intangible elements of culture in 2003 UNESCO added the following to the definition of culture “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage” (Shalaginova, 2012, p. 5).

Most of the many definitions of heritage interpretation are education or communication-based, e.g., “heritage interpretation is any communication process designed to reveal meanings and relationships of cultural and natural heritage to the public, through first-hand involvement with an object, artifact, landscape or site” (Interpretation Canada, 2014). As I am making a case for taking a broader perspective in HI, I have presented two different definitions for consideration. “Interpretation is the craft of enriching the experience of leisure visitors with places established for the public good” (Van Matre, 2008, p. 1) and in reference to heritage interpretation, but not specifically identified as a definition, Staiff (2014, p. 24) described heritage interpretation as “rather than being a matter of communicating something to a (passive
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and temporary) visitor, it is the production of meaning by the visitor in their interaction with the place.”

The term inspiration-based interpretation is my own expression and is used to represent an approach to interpretation in which the concept of inspiration is considered in all aspects of planning, management, program delivery and interactions with visitors.

The term holistic heritage interpretation is also my phrase and refers to interpretation in which the whole person is considered, i.e., the cognitive, affective and conative domains. In holistic heritage interpretation people are engaged at the level of their heads, hearts and hands, i.e., information, emotion and action are all incorporated. In referring to the tripartite model of the human mind, I have deliberately used the term conative instead of the more commonly used term behavioural, as I believe conative is a more appropriate term for use in inspiration-based interpretation. Conative is from the Latin word conatus, meaning endeavoured, and the term conative is defined in the Oxford Online Dictionary as “of or involving conation” with conation defined as “the mental faculty of purpose, desire, or will to perform an action; volition” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2014a). Conative addresses how people act on their thoughts and feelings (Gerdes & Stromwall, 2008) and in HI would refer to people performing actions that have meaning for them, which may or may not be the same as behavioural changes desired by the organization offering the HI.

The term agency is used throughout the dissertation to describe any organization that offers HI, including government and non-governmental groups, as well as private enterprises.
Throughout this document I have used the term *interpreter* to refer to all participants in the study, although some were front line interpreters, while others were either supervisors or program managers within an interpretive context. I refer to the interpreters who were involved in the study as *research participants* or *participants* and the recipients of HI as either *visitors* or *audience*, in order to avoid confusion between the two groups.
Chapter Two: Review of Literature

In this chapter I present a review of the relevant literature from the HI field, followed by a review of the inspiration literature, a segment on inspiration within the HI literature, and lastly, a section on World Cafe.

Heritage Interpretation

As a general introduction to the field of HI I have used the Five Ws plus one H approach, i.e., who, what, when, where, why and how, followed by a case for the field of HI needing to take a more visitor-oriented approach.

The Five Ws and one H of HI. What is heritage interpretation? As presented earlier, there are multiple definitions of HI; however, it is usually considered a communication or education process that seeks to reveal meanings and connect people to places and objects of natural and cultural heritage, e.g., at parks, museums, zoos and other sites (Beck & Cable, 2011; Mills, 2001; Tilden, 1977). The field of HI formally began in North America in 1920 with the publication of Adventures of a Nature Guide by Enos Mills (2001), in which he referred to guided nature study as “interpretation.” The term HI is used to refer to the interpretation of either natural or cultural heritage resources, which have been defined in Chapter One.

Where does HI take place? A visit to a park, zoo, museum, or other cultural site reveals that HI is widespread. In North America, HI is supported by the Parks Canada Agency and the U.S. National Park Service, as well as Canadian and American national professional organizations, and a host of agencies across Canada and the United States. Internationally, HI may be experienced at a multitude of parks, museums, zoos, and other cultural and natural
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heritage sites; and professional organizations exist in many countries, including Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, for example. There are many advocates for the services HI provides and the fact that HI is supported by agencies and audiences worldwide is evidence of its perceived importance to society today (Alfonsi, 2005; Beck & Cable, 2011; Boyle, 2004; Brochu & Merriman, 2002; Curthoys & Clark, 2002; Ham, 1992; Parks Canada Agency, 2010; US National Park Service, 2006, 2009; Vadala, Bixler, & Hammitt, 2006).

Interpretation is typically a place-based form of communication as it seeks to connect people to the uniqueness of the site they are visiting or the objects/artifacts/specimens that they are viewing; these are the resources that HI is built on. Considering the site’s *genius loci*, or special meaning, is considered the starting point for HI (Beck & Cable, 2011) and there are many references to the importance of place to HI; including, for example, Turek (2006) who advocated for place-based HI that connects audiences directly to the heritage resource enabling them to hear site specific stories and share in the work of meaning making. In another example showing the importance of place in HI, Hunter (2012a) studied sense of place in park interpretation and concluded that developing attachment to place may lead to re-inhabitation and preservation of place. Steve Van Matre (2008) eloquently refers to HI places as “public jewels” and states he believes that “the staff’s first obligation is to the jewel, then to the visitors coming to check it out.” Throughout this document it is acknowledged that the place is critical to HI, although the focus of the inquiry is on visitors.

*When is HI offered? Who are the recipients?* HI is generally an agency-supported initiative that is offered at sites when and where visitors are expected, although the internet is
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being used increasingly for HI and topics within HI may now include non-place based concepts such as justice, for example. HI consists of personal services in which an interpreter leads a program, such as a guided walk or tour, campfire talk, informal roving at the site, or an evening theatre show, as well as non–personal services where an interpreter is not present, such as interpretive signs, brochures, websites and exhibits (Beck & Cable, 2011; Ham, 1992, 2009; Tilden, 1977). Many sites offer both personal and non-personal services, while some sites only offer one or the other depending on budgets and site usage. All visitors to heritage sites are potential recipients of HI. In the case of museums and other sites with a focus on non-personal media, 100% of visitors are considered recipients of HI, since exhibits and signage are central at these sites.

HI is offered at Canadian and American national parks. Parks Canada’s mandate includes fostering understanding and appreciation, and states “on behalf of the people of Canada, we protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada’s natural and cultural heritage and foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure their ecological and commemorative integrity for present and future generations” (Parks Canada Agency, 2014, p. 1). According to the 2012 National Survey of Canadians (Harris/Decima Inc., 2012) there is a desire to learn more about Parks Canada and about Canadian history and wildlife, suggesting that people are interested in what HI offers. The U.S. National Parks Service management policy document states “the intent will be to provide each visitor with an interpretive experience that is enjoyable and inspirational within the context of the park’s tangible resources and the meanings they represent” (US National Park Service, 2006, p. 90). Studies have shown that on average
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12% of visitors to U.S. national parks take part in interpretive programs (Stern, Powell, & Hockett, 2011). The question of why more site visitors do not participate in HI is an important one to answer for the future success of the field. This topic requires more investigation, including addressing if the instrumental knowledge-based approach is affecting participation numbers and if so, to what extent, and how do we rectify the situation.

*How* is HI offered? The field of HI is guided by principles proposed by Tilden in 1957, at a time when the profession was becoming more institutionalized and therefore required guidance (Machlis & Field, 1984). Tilden’s principles (1977), which are still used to guide the field, are:

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.

2. Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However all interpretation includes information.

3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.

4. The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.

5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.
6. Interpretation addressed to children (say up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.

More recent scholarship provide advice regarding guiding principles and best practices (Beck & Cable, 2011; Ham, 1992, 2013; Larsen, 2011; Widner Ward & Wilkinson, 2006); and this steers the field in practice; however, in general, the advice seems to be based on the instrumental knowledge approach as it focuses primarily on providing agency-approved information, and fails to account for the contested nature of heritage and the multiple perspectives visitors bring to the interpretive experience.

Why is HI offered? The field of HI is grounded in the often-referenced phrase first introduced but not originally written by Freeman Tilden in 1957 “through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection” (1977, p. 38). Tilden’s dictum implies that the end goal of HI is protection of the resource and this goal is still subscribed to by many agencies (Benton, 2009), e.g., the U.S. National Park Service stresses that encouraging a stewardship ethic and protecting park resources are the key purposes of HI (2006) and the Parks Canada Agency notes that HI is aimed at helping visitors discover and learn about parks while ensuring protection of the place for the future (Parks Canada Intranet, personal communication, Aug 15, 2012). Over the last half century, the goals of HI have broadened beyond protection of heritage resources to include other agency-based objectives, which I discuss later in this chapter.
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Need for more holistic HI. As previously stated, the belief that HI as a field needs to become more focused on reaching the whole person is supported by various scholars. Rethinking Tilden’s direction provided me with a sound starting point for an exploration into this topic; and in this section I have outlined the issues with Tilden’s direction to the field and present suggestions from current HI literature for ways to take a more holistic approach in HI.

Evaluation of Tilden’s direction. As described previously, Tilden’s dictum and principles continue to guide the field more than 50 years after they were presented and Staiff has noted how influential Tilden has been to the field (2014). However, he believes that Tilden’s principles do not stand up under critical scrutiny. For example, Tilden’s claim that interpretation and information are not the same creates a false dichotomy and Staiff proposes switching Tilden’s principle to read that “information is interpretation because it cannot escape being a representation of something” (2014, p. 39). Various other scholars have pointed out that Tilden requires rethinking (Ablett & Dyer, 2009; Silberman, 2013; Staiff et al., 2002; Wortman & Tilbury, 2008). For example, Hvenegaard, Shultis and Butler (2009) believe that the Tilden dictum contains lofty goals and that reaching the end goal of protection has not been researched since it is too difficult to measure, while the information gain, behaviour change and appreciation components have been the central focus since they are easier to investigate. Silberman noted that Tilden’s dictum is not a theory, but a methodology that assumes visitor’s willingness to be persuaded by what he describes as “instrumental emotional discourse” (Silberman, 2013, p. 2). Silberman (2013, p. 16) also stated that Tilden’s motto needs to be replaced with a new paradigm that is “process, not product; collaboration, not ‘expert only’ presentation; memory community,
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not heritage audience” as he believes that the Tildenan approach fails to account for modern complex issues in HI.

Four specific issues with Tilden’s dictum have been identified. First, the end goal of HI in practice has been broadened beyond protection of the resource, and scholars have noted that the field now suffers from too many competing goals (Ballantyne & Uzzell, 1999; Benton, 2009; Peterson, 1988; Poria, Biran, & Reichel, 2009). Goals for HI now include provoking thought (Ham, 2013), accomplishing management goals (Machlis & Field, 1984), providing opportunities for experience and growth (US National Park Service, 2009), educating about and for the broader environment (Ballantyne, 1998b), helping visitors develop a sense of place (Knudson, Cable, & Beck, 1995), inspiring visitors (Henker & Brown, 2011), and promoting and managing sustainable tourism (Benton, 2009; Tubb, 2003). According to Benton (2009), HI has gone through four conceptual phases, ranging from Phase One, when inspiring and connecting the visitors to the resources were the main goals; to Phase Two, when an emphasis on influencing visitor behaviour in order to safeguard the protected area’s resources was introduced; to Phase Three, in which HI was used to foster general environmental literacy; to our current Phase Four, in which tourism and economic objectives are also seen to be goals of HI (Benton, 2009). The profusion of goals in HI has left the field confused about its purpose, especially when new goals seem to be in direct contradiction to past direction and most of the goals are instrumental and aimed at benefiting the agency.

Secondly, some scholars believe that the various goals of HI are too agency-oriented. HI has sought to meet the needs of organizations since its inception as an agency-sponsored
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program, and it continues to be supported by agencies, where it is used as a management tool considered to provide a win-win, i.e., under the belief that it both increases visitor enjoyment and affords the agency an opportunity to foster behaviour changes (Orams, 1996). Centreing on the needs of the sponsoring agency within HI has prompted criticism, and suggestions for broadening the focus to be more inclusive of visitors have been made. For instance, Silberman (2013) pointed out that since the field of HI has evolved within government agencies, it takes a conservative, authoritative stance and this, combined with the neoliberal turn in which heritage is seen as a commodity, has led to HI being a monologue in which visitor contributions are discounted. Silberman described HI as a “unidirectional presentation of carefully selected and arranged information” (2013, p. 24). Ingham (2000) emphasized that park agencies favour this one-way lecture style in HI as it is easy and keeps the audience under control, but that this approach inhibits connections to the place or environment. Howard (2003) suggested that HI is merely indoctrination by the agency and that it discourages people from exploring and making meaning of their own, while Peterson (1988) noted that HI is part of an agency’s public relations program. Vaughn (2004) pointed out that while only one national park visitor in 20 went to an interpretive program in 2003, 100 out of 100 visitors had experiences, and thus HI needed new approaches to appeal to more visitors.

Third, research in various fields such as psychology, place-based studies, and transformative learning has shown that Tilden’s programmatic sequence cannot be guaranteed, i.e., awareness of the need to care for a resource does not automatically transfer into actions to care for the resource (Bush-Gibson & Rinfret, 2010; Clover, 2002; Halpenny, 2010; Silberman,
In contrast, other scholars have focused research on the behaviour change goal of HI, showing varying degrees of success at changing behaviours. For example, Ham (2009) has broken down the dictum into its three parts of understanding, appreciation and protection, and has demonstrated, using the theory of planned behaviour and the elaboration likelihood model, that each of the three parts contributes to behaviour change provided the behaviour is specifically targeted. Other research into the behaviour changes that may be brought about through HI has shown that pre-visit commitment and motivation to learn were the best predictors of long term behaviour change, and that changes could be increased if post visit action resources were provided (Ballantyne, Packer, & Falk, 2011). Studies exploring zoos and wildlife tours have shown the importance of the affective domain and encouraging reflection in achieving greater success with behaviour change (Ballantyne et al., 2007; Hughes, 2012; O. E. Myers, Saunders, & Birjulin, 2004; Zeppel & Muloin, 2007). The programmatic sequence in Tilden’s dictum requires rethinking and increased consideration needs to be given to the role of HI in affecting behaviour change, and to the question “to what extent is behaviour change a realistic and feasible end goal for HI?”
Lastly, enacting the dictum’s sequence in practice has led to HI that is overly focused on reaching audiences at the cognitive level first, under the assumption that this will lead to caring and action to protect the resource (Benton, 2009; Ham, 2007, 2009). As mentioned, the overly-cognitive focus in HI is increasingly being called into question (Ballantyne, 1998b; Silberman, 2013; Staiff, 2014; Uzzell, 1998c; Wortman & Tilbury, 2008) and some scholars have recommended seeking to reach visitors at the affective and conative domains, as well as the cognitive domain (Beck & Cable, 2011; P. Davidson & Black, 2007; Hunter, 2012b; Ingham, 2000; Knapp & Forist, 2014; Martin, 2011; Mitchell, 2005; Wijeratne et al., 2014). For example, Shalaginova (2012) studied the concept of understanding within HI and determined that it is impossible to do HI that is equally understandable to all since all visitors are coming from different places with different levels of existing knowledge. She indicated that understanding is a social action that only occurs through interaction that goes beyond the cognitive. Shalaginova also pointed out that messages are related to cognition while meanings are ascribed based on social rules and that HI needs to be seen as a mechanism for understanding that acknowledges the role of emotion in contextualizing the cognitive and behavioural. Scholars and practitioners in the field may be encouraging holistic HI; however, if the base of their work remains grounded in information transmission and instrumental knowledge gain, this continues to privilege the cognitive domain over the others.

**Improvements to HI needed.** The need for improvement within the profession of HI has been presented by many scholars (Beck & Cable, 2011; Kohl & Eubanks, 2008; Mackintosh, 1986; Novey, 2008; Staiff et al., 2002; Uzzell & Ballantyne, 1998). For example, in 1998 Uzzell
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indicated “interpretation is, I suggest, stuck in a rut where the how has become more important than the why. Interpretation will only have a significant impact on society and contribute to global citizenship when practice is informed by consciously articulated theory” (1998a, p. 12).

The author also noted that interpreters and agencies need to be more open to new ways and see themselves as agents of change and not supporters of the status quo (Uzzell, 1998a). The HI field has also been criticized for not being sensitive to our multicultural, diasporic and postcolonial society (Staiff et al., 2002) and for not meeting the needs of visitors in today’s realities, i.e., increasing urbanized populations, decreasing visitation to some sites, increasing immigration from developing to developed countries, changing tourism industry and increasing dominance of technology (Jager & Sanche, 2010; Merriman & Brochu, 2004; Pergams & Zaradic, 2006; Staiff et al., 2002). Other professionals have suggested that HI lacks cohesion (Dewar, 2000; Peart, 1988) and can no longer afford to operate without an answer to the question “interpretation, to what end” (Peart, 1988, p. 112)? Lastly, in a recently published book Staiff (2014) indicated that HI needs a re-imagined future as the internet has created a world in which production and consumption of content are co-joined and that this trend will have enormous impact on the field of HI. He stated “it is the active participation of the user/visitor that is critical and this participation is not just active looking, or considered and thoughtful listening or reading, or the meshing of the new information with the already known, or a sense of informal learning in situ. Such a paradigm of understanding digital media is defective and far too limiting” (2014, p. 122). Staiff (2014) also proposes that HI be conceived of as a system of representation, i.e., the
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meaning is not inherent in the place or object waiting for interpreters to reveal it; instead the meaning is outside the place or object and inside people.

Many within HI have heeded the advice of scholars and sought to make changes to the profession; however, the field of HI may benefit from consideration of a new perspective, such as the one provided by the concept of inspiration. This “new” idea may provide a return to the roots of HI and help the profession continue to get out of Uzzell’s described rut and into Staiff’s re-imagined future.

In today’s experience-oriented world (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999), agencies are expected to more actively engage visitors and more emphasis on visitors is clearly needed in HI. Both Parks Canada and the U.S. National Park Service have realized that they need to favour a more visitor-oriented approach, including providing visitors with unique and personalized experiences (Jager & Halpenny, 2012). The U.S. National Parks Service (2006, p. 93) management policy document pointed out that for HI to reach the increasingly diverse population, it must change its traditional approach and implement new and innovative ways to reach people, and thereby connect more people to these places. Chalfant (2004) has noted that changes are needed to reflect visitor needs and to reach out to new audiences. As an individually-focused concept, inspiration may help bring balance to the overly agency-focused interpretive services through bringing the needs, wants and intents of visitors to the forefront.

**Issues with cognitive focus in HI.** A visitor-oriented approach in HI would place the needs of the visitor first, and the whole person would be central, as alluded to in Tilden’s principle number five, i.e., interpretation must address itself to the whole person (1977). The
cognitive, or information first, “rational actor” approach favoured by agencies would need to be broadened beyond use of the sender-message-receiver model of communication (Ablett & Dyer, 2009; Shalaginova, 2012). This typical approach has a primary focus on presenting thematic material in an order that will ensure the best retention by the visitor (Ham, 2009; Knapp, 1995; Widner Ward & Wilkinson, 2006). Ham (2007) has indicated that if the theme is relevant and delivered in a compelling way it may lead to changes in visitor attitudes and behaviours. Steve Van Matre (2008, p. 25) has a different opinion and he has stated that sites are not set aside for their themes and asks “do we really want our visitors to take home a couple of nice themes? Or do we want them to take home some appreciation for what we are doing, based upon specific understandings and feelings?” Themes are an agency tool to ensure organization messages are communicated in an organized manner that will make them understandable to visitors and will therefore lead to behaviour change. Themes are not necessarily a visitor-oriented approach as they fail to consider the multiple meanings the visitors’ bring to the site and what they take away, and, while themes are supposed to only be a means to an end, they seem to have become the end itself, as evidenced in practice by the central role themes play in program planning and delivery. In holistic HI, the emphasis would be shifted away from a central focus on presenting information, to approaches that reach out to meeting the various needs of the visitor; an approach in which themes may play a reduced role.

Although the provision of information in HI is important and necessary, some scholars believe that increased attention to the emotional domain in HI is needed (Ballantyne, Packer, & Sutherland, 2011; Dierking, 1998; Ingham, 2000; Kool, 1987; Poria et al., 2009; Reisinger &
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Steiner, 2006; Shalaginova, 2012; Silberman, 2012; J. G. Smith, 1999; L. Smith, Broad, & Weiler, 2008; Stern, Powell, Martin, & McLean, 2012; US National Park Service, 2009; Uzzell & Ballantyne, 1998) and I present five examples from the literature to support this claim. In a 2011 issue of *InterpScan* Martin (2011) advocated for a hearts first, then minds approach to HI stating that “if we build strong emotional connections between people and place, then we can indeed make the world a little bit better.” In a study involving cave tour guides, Davidson and Black (2007) discovered that the guides wanted their visitors to have an emotional experience first and foremost, above having knowledge gain. This result led the authors to suggest going beyond the typical cognitive focus to place more emphasis on emotions and sensual experiences. Smith, Broad and Weiler (2008) advocated for the use of Gardner’s multiple intelligences as a means of reaching more visitors; their research indicated that cognitive, affective and behavioural outcomes all increased when people were exposed to multiple media. In a study involving emotional display rules in a zoo context, the researchers reported that guides were expected to display positive and passionate emotions, although complexity in emotions and tensions were apparent when the guides were sharing more serious conservation messages with the visitors (Wijeratne et al., 2014). Lastly, Aristotle’s rhetorical persuasion triangle is relevant to holistic HI. The three points of his triangle include *logos*, in which persuasion is based on the message or text; *pathos*, in which the persuasion is based on an appeal to emotion and *ethos*, in which persuasion is based on the credibility of the writer or speaker (Stanford University, 2010). In HI the persuasive appeal to visitors has been based mainly on logos, i.e., the content, and
somewhat on ethos, i.e., the presenter as a credible agent of an agency. In an inspiration-based approach to HI the persuasive element of pathos would be given more attention.

The literature in the HI field includes suggestions for increasing focus on the conative domain, although the term conative is not generally used. The terms action or behavioural change are typically referred to and generally relate to encouraging visitors to take action to protect the place or the broader environment, after participating in HI (Beck & Cable, 2011; Brochu & Merriman, 2002; T. J. Brown et al., 2010; Ham, 2007; Kohl & Eubanks, 2008; Orr, 1992). In some literature, active participation during HI is encouraged (Ballantyne, Packer, & Sutherland, 2011; Falk & Dierking, 2000; Knapp & Benton, 2004; Taylor & Caldarelli, 2004).

For example, Steier, Ostrenko and Thompson (Steier & Ostrenko, 2000; Thompson, Steier, & Ostrenko, 2014; Thompson & Steier, 2013) have presented recommendations for science center design that incorporates conversation and reflection-in-inter-action as a reframing of museum design, in which the audience is directly involved in exploring and learning.

The actual information provided in typical agency-based HI may be problematic for a variety of reasons. First, agency-based information may fail to account for the contested nature of heritage and multiple viewpoints, an issue described by Smith (1999, p. 147) as “heritage texts exist in a tension-filled environment.” Generated texts reflect the power of the agency and favour certain philosophies, histories, or cultures over others (Ballantyne & Uzzell, 1999; Dicks, 2000; Hara, 2012; J. G. Smith, 1999). In an effort to broaden texts from a single perspective, Staiff, Bushell and Kennedy (2002, p. 97) recommended considering five questions in HI “Who are the owners/custodians of the areas? How are they and the areas represented? Who speaks for them?
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What is spoken and why? Who is listening to the messages?” The role of the interpreter in choosing the texts is also fraught with potential issues (Ashley, 2006), e.g., what messages do interpreters choose to share, what is left out, and how do interpreters see themselves, i.e., as agents perpetuating the hegemony or resistors advocating for change? Word choices are critical. For example, Peterson (1988) noted that heritage interpretation’s use of adjectives such as tranquility, beauty, excitement, perfect, natural and so on, favour the preservationist perspective for wilderness and fail to account for the role of humans, while Markwell, Stevenson and Rowe (2004) pointed out that texts in HI may favour a male-centric perspective and neglect to account for the complexities of multiple socio-economic groups, despite attempts by planners to be inclusive. As a means to overcome the hegemonic agency-based information focus, scholars have advocated for HI that incorporates dialogic approaches that may help to encourage social construction and meaning making among visitors, rather than merely telling the agency-oriented story (McCarthy & Ciolfi, 2008) and interactive approaches, such as street theatre, that encourage visitors to contribute to the construction of heritage (J. G. Smith, 1999), even if this means the generation of understandings that are counter to those of the agency.

Secondly, the information being provided in HI may not account for changes in heritage, i.e., acknowledgment of the living nature of heritage. For example, in a study based in the Northern Territory in Australia, the author reported concerns with impacts of globalization on the local culture, and indicated the need for local support to keep the unique character of the place alive; although competing interests and questions of sovereignty complicated matters regarding the various stories being told in the multicultural nature of the region (Langfield, 2010). In
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another example, at the Twyford Downs in England, Schofield (2005) pointed out that the heritage story has changed and that the recent changes to the landscape all contribute to the value of the place and enhance the modern experience.

Lastly, the information provided in HI may be homogenized in the interest of pleasing the visitors. For example, at sites such as zoos, conservation messages may be overshadowed by the requirements to raise revenue and provide entertainment, resulting in downplaying of the serious messages (Wijeratne et al., 2014). In another example, Wong (2013) reported that the colonial history of Macau is being homogenized as guides focus on creating a positive visitor experience rather than telling the contentious history of the place, i.e., the guides tailor the program to suit the audience; avoiding references to the colonial past for fear of offending Chinese visitors. As these example show, the information provided by agencies in HI is not as simplistic and value-free as believed and warrants further investigation as a means to avoid hegemony and provide visitors with an opportunity to make personally relevant meanings.

Visitor-oriented pedagogy in HI. As shown above, there is interest by scholars and practitioners to widen the focus in HI to be more visitor-oriented, including taking a more holistic perspective that considers the affective and conative domains, as well as the cognitive domain. A visitor-oriented approach fits within the constructivist epistemology, in which visitors are encouraged to actively make meaning based on their previous knowledge and experiences, rather than passively receive information (Shalaginova, 2012). Recommendations for constructivist, visitor-oriented approaches may be found in the HI literature and I have outlined in Figure 1 and Table 1 ten themes that summarize the suggestions from the literature. These
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brief references to the suggestions made by various authors from the field of HI are not meant to be exhaustive; some themes may overlap, and there are likely other suggestions and references that I failed to include. I have used the term visitor-oriented, rather than visitor-centred in recognition of the role of visitor; in HI the place/object/concept is central.
Figure 1 Mind map of recommendations from the HI literature for visitor-oriented HI
Table 1 *Themes from the HI literature for visitor-oriented HI*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes from Literature Review</th>
<th>Sample of References</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Know the audience. E.g., understand demographics, psychographics, interests, motivations, and expect differences in people.</td>
<td>(Goodrich &amp; Bixler, 2012; Knapp &amp; Forist, 2014; Poria et al., 2009; Skibins, Powell, &amp; Stern, 2012)</td>
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<td>2. Foster connections to places and people’s lives. E.g., connect people to sites, their home places, and to their own heritage.</td>
<td>(Curthoys &amp; Clark, 2002; 2007; Hunter, 2012a; Poria et al., 2009; J. G. Smith, 1999)</td>
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<td>3. Consider HI an ongoing process. E.g., view HI as ongoing public discourse and not a finished commoditized product.</td>
<td>(Ashley, 2006; Ingham, 2000; Peterson, 1988; Poria et al., 2009; Silberman, 2012; J. G. Smith, 1999; Staiff, 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Be inclusive and respectful of individuality. E.g., consider HI as owned by the audience, recognize multiple viewpoints, and acknowledge people are individuals.</td>
<td>(Ablett &amp; Dyer, 2009; Dicks, 2000; Markwell et al., 2004; Poria et al., 2009; Staiff et al., 2002)</td>
</tr>
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<td>5. Encourage meaning making. E.g., acknowledge that audiences are not passive students but active and curious meaning makers, engage visitors in considering the impacts of their behaviours on the environment, provide visitors with suggestions for post visit actions, and accept that meaning is not inherent in the resource.</td>
<td>(Ashley, 2006; Ballantyne, 1998a; Dicks, 2000; Luck, 2003; Noh, 2014; Poria et al., 2009; J. G. Smith, 1999; Staiff, 2014; Uzzell, 1998a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Promote mindfulness in visitors and staff. E.g., be mindful of why interpreters ask questions, ask questions with multiple answers to encourage creative thinking, provide a balance between enough and too much information.</td>
<td>(Langer, 1997; Markwell et al., 2004; Moscardo, 1996; Noh, 2014; Wong, 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Reduce cognitive focus. E.g., reduce focus on information. E.g., consider that information is not neutral and value free.</td>
<td>(Ballantyne, 1998a; Knapp, 2007; J. G. Smith, 1999; Uzzell, 1998b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Engage visitors in active involvement. E.g., encourage two-way or multiple-way dialogue, hands on activities, social interaction, cultural exchanges, time for reflection, etc.</td>
<td>(Ballantyne, Packer, &amp; Sutherland, 2011; Ballantyne &amp; Packer, 2009; Ballantyne, 1998a; Blaney, 2013; Dierking, 1998; Falk &amp; Dierking, 2000; Goldman, Chen, &amp; Larsen, 2001; Goodrich &amp; Bixler, 2012; Grenier, 2008; Hunter, 2012b, 2012a; Knapp &amp; Benton, 2004; McCall &amp; McCall,</td>
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| E.g., use stories, poems, the place, street theatre, etc. to evoke emotions. | (Ballantyne, Packer, & Falk, 2011; Ballantyne et al., 2007; Hughes, 2012; Ingham, 2000; Latham, 2013; Martin, 2011; J. G. Smith, 1999; Wijeratne et al., 2014) |

| 10. De-centre the interpreter. | (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006; Shalaginova, 2012; Sikoryak, 2008; Uzzell, 1998b) |
| E.g., facilitate, provide a base of information and support but let the visitor be responsible, let the place and experience speak for themselves, view HI as an interaction between a team of communicators, including the visitors as active meaning makers. |

Enacting the suggestions in Table 1 in practice requires a particular focus in training, as well as ongoing research and improvements in evaluation in HI. For example, various scholars have recommended training would be required in the following areas:

- emotional intelligence;
- constructivist approaches;
- hands-on ways to involve the audience;
- facilitation skills; and

In regards to research, some scholars have also recommended that more research into visitor-oriented HI is required (Butler, 2009; Hunter, 2012b; Lackey, 2008; Larsen, 2004; Vander Stoep, 2004; Zarki, 2004), while others have specifically noted that new evaluation tools
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are needed in HI. For example, Stewart and Kirby (1998) have called for more theory-driven approaches to evaluation in HI, noting that visitor recall of text or content reflects a cognitive focus in evaluation, and that new approaches are needed that include sociological aspects of visitor behaviour or experiential evaluation, i.e., which measures the experience in a setting, rather than focusing on the media or learning.

Scholars have also suggested that HI in general may benefit from in-depth investigation into approaches being taken in museums as these places seem to be ahead of other interpretive sites in terms of considering multiple viewpoints, presenting contentious issues and encouraging visitors to be authors and not merely readers (Black, 2010; Neill, 2010; Pekarik, Schreiber, Hanemann, Richmond, & Mogel, 2014; Reynolds, 2011; Staiff et al., 2002; Stylianou-Lambert, 2010; Welsh, 2005).

In conclusion, a review of the literature indicated that HI would benefit from taking an approach that places more emphasis on the individuals involved, i.e., the visitors, and an approach that places more emphasis on the affective and conative domains, as well as the cognitive domain.

Inspiration

As noted previously inspiration is defined in the Oxford Online Dictionary as a “breathing in or infusion of some idea, purpose, etc., into the mind; the suggestion, awakening, or creation of some feeling or impulse, especially of an exalted kind” (Oxford University Press, 2000, p. Section II 3b). A detailed definition posited by Jennings in his doctoral dissertation is also worth considering within the context of inspiration in HI, as it relates to inspiration as a
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psychological construct, inspiration is “a motivational state experienced when self-transcending or other-praising emotions are triggered by a value-congruent stimulus and activate a desire to express or enact a value-congruent goal” (2012, p. 33). Hart (1993) described the two fundamental types of inspiration as spiritual/religious and creative, the latter including artistic and scientific creativity that may be focused on problem solving or everyday scenarios. Historically, inspiration was considered within the domains of theology and philosophy, and was seen as originating from an external source, such as a deity or muse, and reserved for extraordinary people such as brilliant poets and artists, who would then share their inspiration with the masses (Gotz, 1998; Kwall, 2006; Simopoulos, 1948; Thrash & Elliot, 2003, 2004). Within modern times the focus has shifted to considering inspiration as egalitarian (Gotz, 1998; Hart, 1993, 1998; Kwall, 2006; Montuori, 2011; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Simopoulos, 1948; Thrash & Elliot, 2003, 2004).

Inspiration seems to be a useful concept to apply to the HI field. In studies into inspiration, Hart made connections between inspiration and education and indicated that “education at its best seems to both inform and inspire” (1993, p. 166). He went on to note that in seeking to improve our education system we typically look to improving the information exchange, and yet inspiration may “both serve to work as a catalyst for learning and should emerge naturally and regularly out of a process of learning. It is this experience that we may want to nurture, notice and use as a guide for directing educational enterprise” (1993, p. 166). I believe his points regarding education are valid to HI, in which improving the information
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exchange is the typical focal point of HI research and practice. Viewing HI through the lens of inspiration may provide a fresh and useful perspective.

The benefits of inspiration are seen to be plentiful and include well being (Hart, 1993; Thrash, Elliot, et al., 2010), creating tangible objects (Engen, 2005; Thrash, Maruskin, et al., 2010), making life worth living (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), helping people flourish (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997), meeting people’s need for seeking higher ideals such as creativity, meaning and spiritual truth (Thrash & Elliot, 2004), and transmitting knowledge of higher goods upon which cultures are based (Thrash & Elliot, 2004). Simopoulos (1948, p. 35) described inspiration as “the answer to a deep human need” and Hart (1993) explained it as a subtle and ephemeral event. The benefits of inspiration are widely acknowledged; however, it is a complex concept that remains a mystery, although the term inspiration is popular, and seems to be overused in our modern world.

Characteristics of inspiration. The main characteristics of inspiration as identified in the inspiration literature are shown in Figure 2 and described in the following pages.
Figure 2 Mind map showing characteristics of inspiration

_Inspiration is two-sided._ The research into inspiration concludes that inspiration encompasses two key elements, i.e., the trigger or what people are _inspired by_, and the target or what they are _inspired to_ do or be (Hart, 1993, 1998; Jennings, 2012; Thrash, Elliot, et al., 2010; Thrash & Elliot, 2003, 2004). Both manifestations of inspiration are necessary and linked (Gonzalez, Metzler, & Newton, 2011; Hart, 1993, 1998; Simopoulos, 1948; Thrash, Elliot, et al., 2010; Thrash & Elliot, 2003, 2004). Jennings (2012) pointed out that both sides of inspiration are required in order to differentiate it from other emotions such as awe or wonder. See Figure 3 for a visual that indicates the two sides of inspiration based on key words from the literature.
People are inspired by different sources. One side of inspiration, i.e., the trigger or what people are inspired by, varies from person to person, although there are similarities between people. Hart (1993) was the first to study inspiration as a psychological construct and through his doctoral research with college students as participants he determined that typical triggers of inspiration were nature, love, suffering, courage, music, exercise, religion, beauty, and quality;
nature being the most commonly reported external source of inspiration. Thrash, Elliot and colleagues (2003, 2004; 2010) continued to advance the study of inspiration and reported that inspiration may come from within or without, and that people are inspired by encounters with a person, object, act, or idea. Other researchers have added to this list and record that internal sources of inspiration may include supernatural sources such as a deity or spirit; or ideas such as truth, beauty, or goodness; while external sources of inspiration may include other people, i.e., mentors or high achieving role models; objects in the environment such as nature, music, literature; or undertaking an activity such as making a fire, enjoying a cup of tea, watching a motivational video; or taking part in a physical activity (Gonzalez et al., 2011; Hart, 1993; Kwall, 2006; Thrash & Elliot, 2003, 2004).

People are inspired to different ends. The other side of inspiration, i.e., the target, or what people are inspired to, also varies from person to person, yet shows similarities between people. Hart (1993) found that for college students, inspiration manifested in actions such as sharing the inspiration with others through talk, art, writing, photography, or efforts for self improvement. Other researchers have added that inspiration may manifest in achieving success in sports or academics, improving the self, achieving a personal goal, solving a problem, creating something, being transformed, supporting a cause, or leaving it to fate (Gotz, 1998; Hart, 1993, 1998; Jackson, 2012; Kwall, 2006; Thrash, Elliot, et al., 2010; Thrash & Elliot, 2003, 2004).

Described as “approach motivation” by Thrash and Elliot (2010), the authors explained that this side of inspiration involves energy and action, with no thought of reward. Hart (1993) noted that people must be both passive and active for inspiration to occur, i.e., passive and open to
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inspiration, then active after being inspired. Hart (1998) also pointed out that the target of inspiration may manifest in the form of action, i.e., doing something, or it may manifest in being, i.e., inspired to just be.

*Linkages between inspired by and to.* Inspiration includes two sides and while both are necessary and linked, there may or may not be a time lag between the two stages. Hart (1993) noted that the recipient of inspiration was often compelled to communicate the idea while it was still fresh, i.e., to immediately validate the experience and capture the idea, with no time lag between the *inspired by* and *inspired to* phases. Hart (1998) also pointed out that the target of inspiration may come later, e.g., at an unexpected time and may not be externally visible. Thrash and Elliot (2004) noted that in some cases there may be no apparent outlet for the inspiration, e.g., a person may be inspired by the beauty of the Grand Canyon, but have no immediate outlet for that inspiration, and therefore they may not act on the inspiration right away, although it may manifest at a later time. In HI it is the perceived role of the interpreter to provide the *inspired to* component for visitors to give them an outlet for the inspiration, should they wish to have one. I have addressed the role of HI in the *inspired to* side of inspiration later in this chapter.

Recipients of inspiration may manifest the inspiration in various ways. For example, in doctoral research, Engen (2005) determined that inspiration led to a creative product, once certain enabling conditions were met, e.g., altered awareness led to energy, which led to the creative product or tangible result of inspiration, in a process he referred to as the “catalyst model of inspiration.” In a study within the sports science field, researchers tested the use of pep talks to motivate and inspire athletes, and discovered that the research participants were inspired
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by the pep talk to perform; however, they were not necessarily motivated (Gonzalez et al., 2011), leading the authors to conclude that more research into the construct of inspiration, and its relationship to motivation is required. Such research would also be useful to the field of HI as it may help determine if there is a difference between motivation and inspiration in HI and how to use this knowledge to improve the field.

**Inspiration is transcendent.** Transcendence is one of inspiration’s core characteristics (Hart, 1998; Jennings, 2012; Thrash, Elliot, et al., 2010; Thrash & Elliot, 2004; Thrash, Maruskin, et al., 2010). Inspiration involves something out of the ordinary, which was described by Vaughan in Simopoulos as “bright shoots of everlastingness” (1948, p. 32) and by Hart as “an uplifting and emotional experience” (1993, p. 159). Inspiration involves being in the moment, i.e., when a person is inspired they are in a special zone, described as “finding flow” by Csikszentmihalyi and colleagues (Abuhmdeh & Csikszentmihalyi, 2012; 1997; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), “peak experiences” by Maslow (1964, 1968) and “mental stillness” by Hart (1993).

**Inspiration is positive.** In keeping with the notion of transcendence, inspiration is seen as being mainly positive and as mentioned earlier, modern studies into inspiration fit within positive psychology (Jennings, 2012). Scholars point out that while inspiration may be brought on by a difficult experience, the inspiration itself is seen as uplifting and expansive (Hart, 1998; Thrash & Elliot, 2003). The consequences of inspiration were described in positive words by Hart’s research participants, as “energized, open, clear, loving, helping others, having meaning, creating, connected, confident, humbled, joyous, and alive” (1993, p. 162). Thrash and Elliot
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described the inspired state as being characterized by “feelings of connection, openness, clarity and energy” (2003, p. 873).

Thrash, Elliot and colleagues (2010) also noted that people usually feel the emotion of gratitude towards the source of their inspiration. This may be relevant to HI in which interpreters seek to have visitors care for their site after visiting. If visitors are inspired by the site, they may feel gratitude towards it, and be more favorably inclined to care for it after. One future research question posed by Thrash et al. (2010) and relevant to HI, would entail researching gratitude, i.e., which yields more gratitude, an intentional agent such as an interpreter, or an unintentional agent such as nature?

**Inspiration is individual.** A key point raised in the inspiration literature noted that inspiration is available to all. In one of the first studies into inspiration as a phenomenon, Hart described the evolution of the historical references to inspiration from its early use in religious circumstances and related to creative genius, to its modern day secular use. The aim of Hart’s doctoral research into inspiration was to “seek out the experiences of ‘average’ folks and understand the similarities and differences between the inspiration of exceptional individuals and those exceptional states that may be found in any one of us” (Hart, 1993, p. 70). Hart was pleased to report that “rather than a rare event reserved for the gifted artist or great mystic, inspiration appears to be something that all of us experience and have some understanding of” (Hart, 1993, p. 159). Inspiration is individual, i.e., what one person is inspired by and to may be very different than what another person is inspired by and to (Jennings, 2012) and the inspiration may or may not be visible to the world; although studies in psychology continue to seek to shed...
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light on how inspiration manifests within individuals (Hart, 1998; Thrash & Elliot, 2003). More research into this topic and its relevance to HI would be useful as it would help the field better understand the needs and wants of the visitor and may provide cues as evidence that inspiration has occurred.

**Inspiration is unexpected.** Another core characteristic of inspiration is that it is accidental or unwilled, and it may come along in leaps and bounds or slowly (Hart, 1998; Jennings, 2012; Thrash & Elliot, 2004). As described by Thrash and Elliot (2003), it includes evocation, or a feeling of being overtaken, i.e., it is out of a person’s control. Inspiration involves a flash, an *aha* moment, a breakthrough, something that is unexpected or, as described by Gotz “the instant when things ‘click’ and fall neatly into place, or a new idea flashes in the dark” (1998, p. 510). Taking a Jungian perspective, Gotz explained that in inspiration the ego is swept along as an observer (1998, p. Note 8) and Hart (1998, p. 32) indicated that inspiration describes a “non rational, postreflective event of knowing.” In describing inspiration, research participants explained feeling that the situation was outside of their power and control; the researchers noted that this seems to be difficult for people to admit in our individualistic and strength-oriented society (Thrash, Maruskin, et al., 2010). Inspiration involves people giving up control and thereby possibly admitting weakness. Research into this paradox within the context of HI would be enlightening, e.g., how do visitors give up control in HI and receive inspiration, in circumstances where they are actually encouraged to take control of their experiences?

**Inspiration is holistic.** Inspiration has been described as bringing the rational and non-rational together (Gotz, 1998; Hart, 1998; Thrash & Elliot, 2003). Through their research into
inspiration as a psychological construct, Thrash and Elliot noticed that inspiration correlated with both rational and experiential processing, and suggested that inspiration “engages the head as well as the heart” (2003, p. 878). Engen described inspiration as involving the whole person “emotional, behavioral, intellectual, and sensory” (2005, p. 16) and Hart referred to inspiration as “full body knowledge” in which emotion and cognition are simultaneously experienced (1998, p. 19). Gotz described inspiration “as a madness, inspiration impels artists on, but only knowledge can guide their search. If inspiration is like the wind all vessels need for movement, knowledge is at the helm” (1998, p. 512). Some scholars have pointed out that for people to experience success based on inspiration, they will need the necessary knowledge and technical proficiency to be able to successfully act on the inspiration (Hart, 1993; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Thrash, Elliot, et al., 2010). HI may be able to provide this knowledge and proficiency.

Inspiration may be associated with spiritual experiences, e.g., research participants in a study during a wilderness trip indicated that the wilderness setting and social interaction combined to produce spiritual inspiration (Fredrickson & Anderson, 1999). In a study of the role of inspiration in scientific scholarship among theistic scientists, some participants described their inspirational experience as a “spiritual manifestation or seeing a picture in their ‘mind’s eye’” (O’Grady & Richards, 2011, p. 360).

**Inspiration is transmissible.** Different authors have pointed out that inspiration may be contagious and self-perpetuate (Fort Brenneman, 2012; Hart, 1993, 1998). As an important contributor to well-being, inspiration may help people flourish, and its ability to spread is usually welcome (Hart, 1993; Jennings, 2012). According to researchers Thrash and Elliott (2004),
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recipients of inspiration have a need to share the inspiration with others, i.e., similar to a chain of magnetized objects; the inspiration is not the terminal peak experience but one link in a transmission in pursuit of higher goals.

Social interactions as sources of inspiration have not been researched to any great extent (Milyavskaya, Ianakieva, Foxen-Craft, Colantuoni, & Koestner, 2012), and Hart (1993) noted in his dissertation that it would be instructive to study collective inspiration, i.e., the inspiration of a whole group of people at an event. Since HI often involves groups of participants, it would be beneficial to explore social interactions in HI as a source of inspiration; this may lead to the provision of more socially-based experiences within HI.

*Inspiration requires receptivity.* While inspiration is seen as being outside the control of a person; receptivity to inspiration is required (Hart, 1993, 1998, 2004; O’Grady & Richards, 2011; Thrash & Elliot, 2004; Thrash, Maruskin, et al., 2010). Receptivity may take the form of tolerance for ambiguity, divergent thinking, focus, trust, letting go or listening (Hart, 1993, 1998) and various scholars have noted the contradiction in that allowing the unknown to take precedence requires self-control and self-trust, as well as giving up control (Hart, 1993; Kwall, 2006). Thrash and Elliot (2003) discovered that positive affect and openness to experience were traits that were positively correlated to inspiration, and that inspiration also correlated positively with intrinsic motivation, but negatively with extrinsic motivation, suggesting that certain personality traits may predispose a person to receptivity to inspiration. In their more recent studies, Thrash and colleagues (2010) explored the connection between creativity and inspiration, and reported that inspiration mediated between the creativity of the idea, and the
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creativity of the product. The authors concluded “to become inspired to create, one must be both open to new ideas, as well as motivationally responsive to those ideas as reward cues” (Thrash, Maruskin, et al., 2010, p. 486). This paradox is also worth exploring in more depth within the HI context as it may provide important insights into ways of motivating visitors to take action after their participation in an HI program. For example, how may visitor receptivity to new ideas be cultivated in HI and what products will they create as a result of the inspiration?

In a recent dissertation that explored inspiration as a state, Jennings determined that inspiration is experienced to a greater degree the more the stimulus is in line with a person’s values. For example “inspiration does not necessarily relate to general prosocial behavior; rather, it relates to specific content domains when those domains are aligned with one’s enduring interests and values” and inspiration is “experienced to a greater degree when the content of a particular stimulus is more congruent with one’s internalized values or interests” (2012, pp. 73–74). These findings have direct relevance to inspiration in HI as they indicate that people’s individual values will play a key role in determining if they are touched by inspiration and their responses.

**Inspiration receptivity may be cultivated.** In this final characteristic of inspiration, I note that inspiration may not be forced on anyone; however, it may be wooed, as described by Hart “although it does not seem possible to will inspiration into existence, it does seem likely that we can set up favorable conditions to woo or invite it” (1998, p. 26). The following compiled list is provided as a summary of suggestions for wooing or cultivating receptivity to inspiration:
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- being open, seeking it, reading, mediating, dialoguing (O’Grady & Richards, 2011);
- having technical proficiency and persistence, invoking inspiration through meditation and spiritual concentration (Hart, 1993);
- focusing, trusting, letting go, listening, understanding that inspiration exists (Hart, 1998);
- viewing objects differently, exposure to high achieving role models (Thrash & Elliot, 2003);
- being contemplative (Hart, 2004);
- collaboratively creating new futures (Montuori, 2011);
- receiving a pep talk or watching an inspirational video (Gonzalez et al., 2011);
- setting goals, particularly successful in people with high trait inspiration (Milyavskaya et al., 2012);
- being open to new ideas and motivationally responsive to those ideas (Thrash, Maruskin, et al., 2010);
- having high attentional involvement, as in “finding flow” (Abuhamdeh & Csikszentmihalyi, 2012; Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000); and
- combining a wilderness experience with social interaction (Fredrickson & Anderson, 1999).
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Other ideas for cultivating inspiration may be found in the *inspired by* and *inspired to* sections earlier in this literature review; the specific ideas noted there may also lead to increased receptivity to inspiration.

In concluding this review of the inspiration literature, I note that inspiration as a psychological construct would benefit from more study, particularly into why people are inspired (Gotz, 1998; Jennings, 2012; Thrash, Elliot, et al., 2010; Thrash & Elliot, 2003); however, the literature that does exist seemed to indicate strong synergy with the field of HI, as I have pointed out throughout.

**Inspiration and HI**

In this final section, I have addressed the concept of inspiration as found within the HI literature and consider the inspiration-based concepts of *inspired by* and *inspired to* from an HI perspective.

**Inspiration within HI literature.** The concept of inspiration within the HI field is not new. Mills used the terms “inspirational” and “educational” to refer to interpretation in his 1920 book *Adventures of a Nature Guide,* pointing out “nature guiding, as we see it, is more inspirational than informational” (2001, p. 142). In *Interpreting our Heritage* (1977) Tilden suggested that the interpreter’s passion can act as a model to inspire visitors. In his 1979 book *The Land Speaks,* Edwards stated “interpretation’s aim is inspiration and revelation, leaving people’s lives never quite the same again because of new interest and understanding” (1979, p. 23). He also poetically shared “I am a firm believer in the value of interpretation not so much because I have seen its inspiration in others, but because I have received its inspiration myself.
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And I thoroughly enjoy being inspired” (1979, p. 15). In their updated book *The Gifts of Interpretation*, Beck and Cable (2011) described the purpose of the interpretive story as to inspire and provoke the audience, and their last three “gifts” of beauty, joy, and passion have similarities to inspiration. Widner Ward and Wilkinson included a small section on inspiration in *Conducting Meaningful Interpretation: A Field Guide for Success*, in which they described the ultimate goal of interpretation as “to inspire others to want to explore further, to learn more on their own” (2006, p. 23). The term inspiration is used by some organizations offering HI. For example, Parks Canada’s slogans are “Real. Inspiring” and “Inspiring Discovery” (2013), while the mission statement of the National Association for Interpretation in the United States is “inspiring leadership and excellence to advance heritage interpretation as a profession” (2014); both examples indicate that the concept of inspiration is important to these agencies. The U.S. National Park Service Education Plan for Denali National Park indicated that inspiration is a desired visitor outcome (2009). And in a dissertation focused on place and HI, one of the researcher’s participants exclaimed that inspiration is “an ultimate goal for interpretation” (Hunter, 2012a, p. 127). These references to inspiration in literature and practice within the HI field indicate that the concept is considered within interpretation, although it has not been given a place of prominence.

Inspiration-focused research in the HI field is nonexistent in either Canada or the United States. A search on Interpretation Canada’s website for the word *inspiration* in the articles of the *InterpScan* Journal revealed that the term was not used in any of the available titles between 2002 and 2013. A search of all current and archived issues of the *Journal of Interpretation*
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Research published by the U.S. National Association for Interpretation revealed that inspiration was not used in the title of any available articles or in the abstracts of any of the current issues. A search on EBSCO Host for the same journal revealed that the word inspiration showed up in eight articles from 2005 to 2012, and in only four was the term used in the body of the article and in relation to HI, versus being used as a general reference, i.e., to describe an interpreter who had just passed away. Environmental education is a field closely related to HI and an online search in the Journal of Environmental Education and Environmental Education Research Journal for the word inspiration in the title or subject revealed no articles, suggesting there has been no recent research with the term inspiration as the focal point within environmental education.

There are, however, references to research involving concepts similar to inspiration within HI. For example, one article in the Journal of Interpretation Research alluded to the concept of inspiration by describing “eureka moments.” The author, LaPage (2002), described concepts similar to the ones used in the inspiration literature, e.g., that eureka moments follow an orderly sequence of events, that people need to be receptive to them, and that we may never know the effects of the eureka moment on people. This provided one example in which a concept similar to inspiration has been referenced by scholars within the HI field, without using the actual term inspiration.

The term provocation is used within HI, and due to its similarity to the term inspiration, I investigated the use of the word provocation. The definition of provocation alludes to a dark side, as defined in the Oxford Online Dictionary as “action or speech that makes someone angry, especially deliberately” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2014b). The term has been used in HI for at least
50 year as Tilden’s principle four stated that “the chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation” (1977, p. 32), Beck and Cable refer to provocation as their fourth principle (Beck & Cable, 2011), and in one of the field’s newest textbooks, the term provocation is referenced 119 times in the index, while the term inspiration is not referenced at all (Ham, 2013). A search for the term provocation in peer-reviewed journals, including the HI field and beyond, indicated that the term provocation has not been the focus of any recent research in any field, except within the law profession. While inspiration seems to be related to uplifting experiences, as shown in the review of the inspiration literature, provocation seems to be more associated with deliberately provoking or making someone angry. The role of provocation relative to inspiration was not a focus for this research project; however, I believe the connection between inspiration and provocation warrants further investigation.

In conclusion, the few references to inspiration in books and journals, and as described earlier, agency mission statements, indicated that the concept is barely considered within the HI field, and that it has not been studied. I believe that research into the topic of inspiration in HI is long overdue.

**Inspired by and inspired to within the HI context.** While the inspired by and inspired to characteristics of inspiration have not been directly referenced within the HI literature, I believe it is important to consider these inspiration-related concepts in association with the HI literature.

The inspired by characteristic of inspiration in HI is represented in a relatively straightforward manner in the HI literature. For example, it is assumed that visitors will be
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*inspired by* the HI provided at the site, whether it is personal or non-personal interpretation, or by the site itself. The pedagogical literature within the HI field is based on improving practice within HI in an effort to help the visitor learn or connect to the meaning of the place (Beck & Cable, 2011; Ham, 1992, 2013; Widner Ward & Wilkinson, 2006), or in inspiration-based terms, to ensure the visitors are *inspired by* something.

The *inspired to* characteristic of inspiration in HI is directly related to the agency’s goals for HI. As previously noted, agencies seek to achieve their own goals through HI and this includes inspiring their constituents to protect the resources, learn more, or make behaviour changes, to name a few (Ballantyne, 1998b; Benton, 2009; Ham, 2013; Knudson et al., 1995; Machlis & Field, 1984; Tubb, 2003; US National Park Service, 2009). This agency focus results in the provision of information in HI that is aimed at inspiring visitors to take actions to support the goals of the agency, and does not seem to account for what the visitors themselves are *inspired by* or what they would like to be *inspired to*.

**World Café**

As previously described, my main research method was the World Café (WC) in an online format, i.e., virtual World Café (VWC). In this section I have summed up my review of the literature into online focus groups, the WC in general, and VWC.

**Online focus groups.** VWC is an internet-based approach, i.e., an online focus group, and therefore a review of it needed to start with consideration of the internet as a research venue. Internet focus groups are a new research method that is relatively inexpensive, provides access to a wide variety of participants, allows for a wealth of information to be gained in a short amount
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of time, maintains focus on a topic, involves minimal risk to the participants and reduces researcher bias (Fielding, Lee, & Blank, 2008). Considerations for research in the online milieu include credibility, recruitment, anonymity and ownership (Fielding et al., 2008), as well as informed consent, benefits, risks, and confidentiality (Eynon, Fry, & Schroeder, 2008). A major consideration in internet research is whether to provide synchronous or asynchronous communication (Gaiser, 2008; James & Busher, 2006; Stancanelli, 2010; K. Stewart & Williams, 2005). A synchronous online focus group, in which all participants are in dialogue at the same time, such as in a WC, provides an ideal opportunity for interactive dialogue between participants, while an asynchronous mode of communication, such as LinkedIn, provides maximum flexibility with timing, as participants may post responses at a time most convenient to them.

**World Café.** The WC, also known as Strategic Café, Knowledge Café, Identity Café, Town Hall Café and Conversation Café (Prewitt, 2011), is one of the large group intervention methods that are very popular intercession tools, with their genesis within the action research work of Kurt Lewin (Bradbury, Mirvis, Nielsen, & Pasmore, 2008; Lewin, 1948). According to WC founders Brown and Isaacs (2005) a WC gathering is appropriate for information sharing, encouraging creativity, building relationships, exploring real world issues, engaging people, exploring challenges and opportunities in depth, and creating meaningful interactions. What differentiates WC from other large group interventions is its focus on facilitating knowledge exchange through rotating groups, often with a different person left behind after each round to share the previous group’s ideas with the next group, and overall, not placing direct emphasis on
creating action plans or work groups (Prewitt, 2011). I elected to pursue the WC method as it is a positive approach that fosters democratic processes, encourages transformative learning, maximizes knowledge exchange (Aldred, 2009; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Prewitt, 2011) and, as described by Thompson and Steier (2013), is an ideal process for helping to create community.

WC is based on the following seven design principles: setting clear context; creating hospitable space; exploring questions that matter; encouraging everyone’s contribution; cross-pollinating and connecting diverse perspectives; listening together; and harvesting collective discoveries (J. Brown, Isaacs, & Margulies, 1999; J. Brown & Isaacs, 2005; J. Brown, 2007; Pagliarini, 2006; Tan & Brown, 2005; Vogt, Brown, & Isaacs, 2003). These principles are relevant for face to face and VWC and I considered them carefully in the development and delivery of my research. I have provided more detail on each principle below, with an emphasis on using WC in the online milieu. Figure 4 is a mind map introduction to the seven principles.
Figure 4 Mind map of WC principles

Setting clear context and creating hospitable space are critical to a WC (J. Brown & Isaacs, 2005; Prewitt, 2011) and are more difficult to achieve in the online format (Fielding et al., 2008); in a face to face WC participants are able to bond over refreshments, and in an online forum it is necessary to offer a suitable replacement (Fielding et al., 2008).

Exploring questions that matter is critical to the success of a WC. Weak or irrelevant questions may fail to generate true dialogue (Prewitt, 2011). Regardless of whether the WC is face to face or online, the questions chosen must be open-ended, well thought out, strategic, directly focused on the research questions, and encourage creativity, workable solutions and in-depth exploration of the topics (J. Brown et al., 1999; J. Brown & Isaacs, 2005; Prewitt, 2011). David Isaacs (personal communication, Oct. 18, 2012) stressed that the keys to developing powerful questions are “design, design, design” and “collaborating with the clients on all aspects of the World Café.” An important step in question development is considering the underlying assumptions and being open to reframing the questions to increase their power and benefits (Vogt et al., 2003). Often the first question in a WC is “what qualities do you think make for a good conversation?” as a means to frame the WC and invite the participants to consider how to
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ensure the WC is a success (Jorgenson & Steier, 2013). It is also common to initiate the dialogue with a reflexive question that encourages participants to share a personal story about some success in their experiences (N. Agger-Gupta, personal communication, January 17, 2015).

*Encouraging full participation* in a WC is achieved through having groups of four rotate between discussions, often leaving one person behind to share the previous group’s thoughts with the new group. This process should create space for diverse perspectives and allow for cross-pollination of ideas. In VWC this rotation is achieved through teleconference technology that (potentially at least) allows for break-out groups. Scheduling enough time for the session and encouraging people to keep track of their ideas throughout the session should both help to provide enough time and encouragement to maintain and keep track of idea flow. This should avoid a pitfall identified by Prewitt et al. (2011), in which some people find the rapid changing of discussion groups to be upsetting. Having a centre to the questions, a clear larger purpose for the WC and a focus on achieving some specific outcome within the available time will also help ensure good idea flow (N. Agger-Gupta, personal communication, January 17, 2015).

*Cross pollinating of ideas* is achieved as participants rotate through discussions, making new connections and sparking insights leading to collective intelligence, often referred to as the “magic in the middle” by Brown and Isaacs (2005). *Listening together* for key insights is achieved as conversations develop wholeness when people are encouraged to listen to, listen with and listen for collective discoveries. As Jorgenson and Steier describe it, a WC “may be full of chance discoveries as participants respond to the moment” (2013, p. 401).
Lastly, *harvesting collective discoveries* is the final step in the WC process. At this stage participants are asked to notice patterns and insights and ask deeper questions with the hope that creative and relevant outcomes have been generated through the various rounds of dialogue. Graphic recordings are an important component of WC at the harvest stage and these visual drawings, created by a trained graphic facilitator, and based on the group’s dialogue, are ideal for galvanizing the discussions. For examples of graphic recordings, please see the appendices. In this final stage of a WC the energy in the room is usually palpable; however, this energy will not be visible in an online WC. As a means to overcome this lack of face to face energy, the skills of the facilitator and graphic recorder will be particularly essential in this final stage (J. Brown & Isaacs, 2005; J. Brown, 2007). Time must be allocated to ensure that this final phase is given adequate attention.

**Virtual World Café.** The virtual format of WC is an approach that is much newer and less traditional than face to face WC, and I could not find any literature on the online approach as a research method. To become familiar with WC and VWC, I completed a seven week course in the fall of 2012 offered online by the World Cafe Community through Fielding Graduate University. Within the WC community of practice there is a group devoted to the use of online WC ([http://www.theworldcafecommunity.org](http://www.theworldcafecommunity.org)) and I referred to this group’s posts for reference. I will address my findings on the use of WC in its online milieu as a research method in Chapter Five.

In closing, I note that the WC approach seemed to suit the field of HI as both are focused on settings and stories (Ham, 1992; Pagliarini, 2006; Tilden, 1977) and both encourage
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integration of science and art (Beck & Cable, 2011; J. S. Brown, 2003; Ham, 1992; Tilden, 1977). WC seems promising as a method to explore topics in HI and may also make for an interesting approach to use with audiences during HI (Wit Ostrenko, personal communication, August 14, 2014).
Chapter Three: Approach and Methods

Positionality

My positionality helped to guide my research choices and I endeavoured to ensure it was considered throughout and communicated to research participants at key stages in the research. My career has been built on the belief that the environment is the base upon which we all depend and therefore we should care for it with due consideration for present and future living beings. A conviction towards sustainability of the environment is complemented by my love of learning, which led me to work in the environmental education and heritage interpretation profession within protected area settings. I believe that HI should aim to reach people at the emotional, as well as the intellectual level, and that audiences should actively participate in HI; all of which I believe will lead to better connections for participants and more likelihood of them taking meaningful actions after.

I am guided by a social constructivist stance as I seek to generate solutions to issues in a democratic manner by encouraging interested people to create options together. I am aware of power imbalances and I believe that it is necessary to seek to overcome them. As a practical person I am driven to produce research results that will improve local conditions and also be of value to a wider audience, such as professional interpreters and to organizations offering HI. I sought to produce results that explored rather than measured. While undertaking the review of the literature, I realized that there was very little qualitative research in HI, very little research that provided the interpreter’s perspective (P. Davidson & Black, 2007; Wong, 2013) and
nothing on using VWC as a research method. Filling these gaps, even in some small way, interested me and prompted me to undertake this research.

I find myself in a unique position in the HI field. I was introduced to it through an undergraduate university course in 1979 and undertook my honours thesis on the topic of environmental interpretation before I had any practical experience in the field. My interest in HI; therefore, started from a theoretical basis and while I have since gained much experience in the practice of interpretation, my first interest is interpretation theory. I was away from direct involvement in HI practice for 18 years prior to reentering the field four years ago and I feel this break has given me an outsider’s perspective on current HI practice. I believe that I am open to viewing practice with a critical eye and I try to be open to new ideas. I practiced reflexivity throughout the study by being mindful of the potential effects of my positionality, being willing to make changes as needed, and encouraging open and thoughtful discussion (Davies & Dodd, 2002).

Within my current position as an Interpretation Coordinator with Parks Canada in Banff National Park, I am responsible for strategic planning and training within the interpretive services, and while this research is fully relevant to my professional duties, the Parks Canada Agency did not contribute to the research in any way.

Methodology

Based on my positionality and to best address the research questions, I determined that the most suitable research methodology was qualitative research. I endeavoured to take a holistic approach to the research and considered the inquiry a process and not a single event, as advised
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by Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011); this led me to keep my philosophical perspective in mind throughout and to choose a qualitative approach. I sought to consider the different parts of the inquiry interlinked and let each phase inform the next, something that is feasible and encouraged within qualitative research. For example, as described by Flick “qualitative research reveals its real potential when important parts of the research process are interlinked” (2009, p. 95). The goal of the inquiry was to explore a new topic and not to indicate cause and effect, and a qualitative approach is ideally suited to such an exploratory and descriptive study (M. Myers, 2000). Involving professional interpreters in dialogue on a topic they know much about and have direct experience with, takes advantage of their experience in context (Silverman, 2006) and qualitative research excels at exploring topics with contextual sensitivity. Limitations within qualitative research include the lack of generalizability (M. Myers, 2000; Silverman, 2006). This exploration into the topic of inspiration in the context of HI is the first of its kind and is not meant to be generalized to the profession, but instead to open the discussion and encourage others to consider the concepts and their value for improving practice. Other limitations with qualitative research include validity and reliability concerns (M. Myers, 2000; Silverman, 2006). In qualitative research the notions of trustworthiness and dependability are used as replacements to the quantitative research terms validity and reliability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) and are described below.

Within the realm of qualitative research, I felt that an Action Research (AR) method would be an appropriate selection for addressing the research questions and for involving professional interpreters in a study that would encourage them to consider how they may
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improve practice and to offer them value in return for their involvement, in the form of ideas that may have merit for their work.

Many of the features of AR were relevant to my research. For example, AR is described as a constructivist approach to collectively undertaking to improve on a concern or problem, and that includes data collection by participants, collaborative decision making, and transformative learning (Altrichter, Kemmis, McTaggart, & Zuber-Skerritt, 2002; Lewin, 1948; Rahman, 2008). It is based on the notion of providing space for democratic dialogue that fosters collaborative problem negotiation and solutions (Allen, 2001; Greenwood & Levin, 2004) and it can be participatory and fair if the process is structured for open and inclusive meaning construction, and developed with care to ensure that all are included (Greenwood & Levin, 2004). Researchers point out that while an important element in AR is the interplay between action and research to achieve desired changes (Afify, 2008); what separates AR from a problem solving exercise is its focus on generating knowledge for society and not just solving a local problem (Pearce & Moscardo, 2007). AR fosters changes and challenges the status quo and unjust systems (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood, & Maguire, 2003). An AR project is a work in progress (Brydon-Miller et al., 2003), a common sense way of learning by doing (Wadsworth, 1998) and can provide a bridging between ‘local’ knowledge and ‘scholarly’ knowledge (Greenwood & Levin, 2004). AR focuses on we, not I, is a form of critical theory that seeks alternatives to the status quo, and requires the researcher to play the role of facilitator (Allen, 2001). Lastly, AR is suitable for informal education settings, e.g., the HI field, provided the unique context of the setting is considered (DeGregoria Kelly, 2009). All the noted features of AR seemed to suit my
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positionality, the research questions and the expected participants, for the reasons described above. Through involving professional interpreters from across North America in my research, I also modeled my belief that involving people leads to increased connection and empowerment, and I hope that I initiated a community of practice that will continue after the research project.

Research Considerations

Three considerations in undertaking the research included the multi-jurisdictional nature of the research, trustworthiness and ethical concerns.

Multi-jurisdictional study. As a researcher associated with Royal Roads University and an employee of the Government of Canada, I was in a dual role with potential conflicts of interest; however, the Government of Canada did not sponsor the research in any way and I was able to maintain distance between my employment and research. I notified all participants through the letter of informed consent and at the beginning of the research sessions of this potential conflict. Throughout the research I was cognizant of potential emerging conflicts and was prepared to report them to the Royal Roads University Research Ethics Board, although no such conflicts emerged.

Trustworthiness. The term trustworthiness, which includes credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), is used to cover the notion of validity, i.e., that the researcher has “gotten it right” and that the research presents an accurate portrayal of the circumstance being investigated (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Within my chosen methodology of AR, trustworthiness is addressed through the acknowledgment that there are different ways of knowing and that different experiences are worthy of consideration (Reason &
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Bradbury, 2008). Credibility, similar to internal validity, was sought through establishing the authority of the researcher, maintaining a field journal for reflexivity, and incorporating peer evaluation (Guba & Lincoln, 2013; Krefting, 1991). Transferability or applicability, similar to external validity, was sought through having the “real world” validate my findings (Guba & Lincoln, 2013; Krefting, 1991; Pyett, 2003); a goal achieved through involving practicing interpreters as my informants. I also undertook to provide thick, rich descriptions in order to allow for comparisons (Krefting, 1991). Dependability or consistency, similar to reliability, was sought through peer examination of the results and a code-recode process, in which the data was coded, then recoded after a period of time had elapsed (Guba & Lincoln, 2013; Krefting, 1991). Finally, confirmability, similar to objectivity, was sought through providing documentation for all stages and maintaining reflexivity, as a means of recognizing that my positionality affected all stages of the research (Guba & Lincoln, 2013; Krefting, 1991).

**Ethics.** Ethical concerns in the research included consideration of respect for persons, concern for welfare, and concern for justice (Canadian Institutes of Health Research Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2010). For the purposes of my research these concerns were addressed through following all the pertinent requirements in the Tri Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (Canadian Institutes of Health Research Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2010) and the Royal Roads University Ethics Policy (Royal Roads University, 2011). Ethics committee approval was received for my original
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proposal as well as for a modified proposal in which I added the use of LinkedIn as a research method. See letter of informed consent in Appendix A. Throughout the study I was mindful of the impact of my positionality on the research setting and participants and sought to act with fairness, integrity and transparency in all dealings.

Research Methods

Within an AR stance I elected to use World Café in an online environment as my main research method, along with a short action-reflection-reporting phase facilitated through LinkedIn.com.

Virtual World Café. Because I was exploring VWC as a research method as part of this dissertation research, I provided a complete introduction to WC and VWC in the literature review chapter. In the remainder of this section I will focus on the details involved in establishing and offering the VWCs as part of my research.

As I was undertaking a study using the internet I had to take online focus group considerations into account. For instance, credibility was enhanced through giving participants an opportunity to review and comment on the results (Herr & Anderson, 2005), recruitment was through self-selection within organized professional associations, the lack of anonymity in an online forum was outlined and discussed in the pre-involvement stage, associated organizations were only identified in results if approved by participants, and ownership was clearly stated as belonging to the researcher. Free and informed consent were assured through using methods required by the Research Ethics Board. Benefits and risks were outlined for participants, and potential benefits included professional networking, transformative learning and involvement in
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generating creative solutions to professional issues. Potential risks were outlined, and included psychological distress, social embarrassment and invasion of privacy (Eynon et al., 2008; Fielding et al., 2008; Herr & Anderson, 2005), although these risks did not seem to be an issue in the study. Maintaining confidentiality within the online focus group was requested of all participants and the discussions and texts were open to participants only.

Offering a VWC required an internet-based interface. After researching potential online meeting tools, including Blackboard/Collaborate and BlueJeans available through Royal Roads University, as well as GoToMeeting.com, MaestroConference.com and UberConference.com, I elected to use MaestroConference.com as it was the only option I could find that would allow for break-out groups and provide digital recordings of these small group discussions. After creating an account and learning how to use MaestroConference, I set about to find my research participants.

Recruitment for involvement in this research opportunity was promoted to HI professionals from across North America through the following means:

- a newly created webpage about my research (www.inspirationresearch.org), all promotions led people to the website for more information and an online application form;
- Interpretation Canada - webpage and Facebook notices, email from Director, article in national publication (InterpScan);
- Interpretive Guides Association (Canadian, based in Banff) - webpage and Facebook notices, newsletter notices;
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- U.S. National Parks Service - email notice from director to staff;
- U.S. National Association for Interpretation - webpage and Facebook notices, newsletter notices;
- U.S. National Association for Interpretation, Regions 1 to 10 - notices on their various Facebook pages;
- Lakehead University, email contact; and
- Parks Canada - various personal contacts.

As part of the application process, potential participants were asked to self-identify their geographic area, main area of interest within HI, i.e., natural or cultural heritage or both, their organization and role, i.e., front line interpreter, supervisor or manager, as well as confirm that they had a minimum of two seasons experience in HI, either as paid work or a volunteer. The participants were also asked to confirm their willingness to:

- consider the role of inspiration as a contributor to holistic HI in practice;
- look at HI from a potentially new perspective;
- consider the cognitive, affective and conative domains in HI;
- treat others with respect and fully engage in the VWC session dialogue;
- maintain confidentiality of the discussions and fellow participants;
- devote approximately 16 hours to the project or 2.5-4.5 hours for those who joined the research project in the fall; and
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- sign a Royal Roads University consent form including agreement to allow digital taping and analysis of typed comments, as well as copyright permission to the researcher.

Participants were advised of the duration of the study in the initial information and asked to commit to the entire project at the outset, although they were reminded throughout the study that they were free to step down at any time. I attempted to maintain interest in the study through regular contact with each participant, ongoing positive reinforcement, and a thank you card with a $5.00 coffee shop gift card sent to the participants prior to each of the VWCs. Out of the 33 different participants, four were involved in all three phases, 22 participated in two phases and seven participated in one phase only. One participant had to leave the fall VWC early and I contacted him after to ensure he was comfortable with his existing comments remaining in the data set. He indicated that he was fine with this, and that he was sorry he had to leave the conversation as he had been enjoying it.

Available time slots for the spring VWC session were voted upon via the online scheduling tool Doodle (www.doodle.com) by participants who had signed up to be involved. I chose May 9 as the date that worked for the majority of participants. In the end, only 13 of the 35 potential participants were involved in the spring VWC on May 9. In an effort to involve more participants, I elected to offer a second spring VWC and undertook another Doodle poll to try to find a suitable time for the remaining interested participants. Based on this second poll, the selected date of May 23 seemed to work for nine out of 10 participants, although only five ended up participating in the session I set up for this date. As a result, this second spring session was
not officially a WC since the group was not large enough to warrant break-out groups and it was run as an online focus group using WC principles. The lack of rotating groups may have been a limitation for this session as the creativity and idea flow expected in a WC may not have been experienced.

All participants were encouraged to join in a trial session through MaestroConference prior to the first VWC in the spring, to ensure the technology was working properly on their computer and to give them familiarity with the tool. In the fall, since many participants had been involved in the spring, I opted not to provide a trial session but encouraged the new people to join in the session 30 minutes early in order to test the connection and give them familiarity with the interface.

Each VWC session lasted for approximately 150 minutes, and I followed the prepared menu closely. The menus for both the spring and fall VWC were sent to participants ahead of time to encourage them to consider the questions prior to the VWC, and they were also shared on the computer screen during the sessions. Copies of the menus may be found in Appendices B and C. All VWC sessions followed the same format; starting with the introductory plenary session to review the research project and informed consent, familiarize the participants with each other, and introduce the first question; followed by three rounds of break-out table groups in which groups of three to four participants dialogued around the questions, with a brief harvest as a plenary at the end of each table group, and lastly, a large group (plenary) harvest session in which all participants reconvened to engage in dialogue designed to wrap up and summarize the discussions.
The following five support roles were filled for both the spring and fall VWCs:

- **Co-facilitator**: As the researcher, I took overall responsibility for keeping the sessions moving along on time, and for presenting the questions.

- **Co-facilitator**: Dr. Niels Agger-Gupta, dissertation committee member, co-facilitated the sessions and provided assistance as needed.

- **Technical support**: MaestroConference provided technical support at each of the VWC sessions.

- **Graphic recorder**: Heidi Forbes-Oste drew graphic recordings during the main spring VWC and the fall VWC.

- **Table hosts for the break-out groups**: were assigned in the spring and emerged organically in the fall VWC.

All support people were required to sign a research advisory team letter of agreement to ensure they knew and agreed to their obligations in regards to having access to raw data.

**LinkedIn action-reflection-reporting phase.** In keeping with the need for an action stage in an AR project, participants were encouraged to reflect upon the topic, take action to use the ideas generated in the first VWC within their particular settings over the summer, and to report their thoughts to the rest of the research group (Afify, 2008; Cady & Caster, 2000). I chose to use LinkedIn.com for maintaining contact with participants between the spring and fall VWCs as it seemed like an appropriate way to encourage the continuation of the dialogue between participants. LinkedIn.com is a free and easy to use online business-oriented professional networking tool, i.e., similar to Facebook, but for professional networking more so than personal
INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

networking. LinkedIn allows for private group discussions, thus I was able to assure participants that their posts would only be visible to other group members. As the group administrator I invited the 27 active participants to join the private LinkedIn discussion group. Seventeen participants accepted the invitation, although only 10 participants actually posted comments, despite repeated email reminders. A total of 27 comments were posted in response to the four thought-provoking questions (Appendix D) I placed on the discussion group site between June 7 and September 27.

Participants

The participants in the study consisted of a total of 33 different HI professionals (see Table 2 for participant details). Overall, 45% of the participants self-identified as managers, 30% self-identified as front line interpreters, 21% self-identified as supervisors; with the remaining 3% (one participant) identifying themselves as a past HI professional. I was pleased to see that 30% of the participants were front line interpreters as I hoped to involve HI staff from all levels. To reach more front line interpreters a study would have to take place in the summer months as many front line interpreters are only employed in the summer; however, they would likely be too busy to be involved at that time.

Overall, 76% of participants were female and 24% were male. All interpreters indicated that they had at least two seasons experience in HI, except one person who was less experienced, but joined in with her colleagues in California. In the fall VWC, a group of six interpreters from one site in California all participated at the same time, and although six people were involved,
for discussion purposes they responded as one participant in order to avoid monopolizing the conversation.

A total of 21 different agencies were represented in the study, including:

- five park organizations, i.e., Parks Canada (two sites), U.S. National Park Service (three sites), Alberta Parks, Metro Vancouver Regional Parks and North Dakota Parks and Recreation;
- two national HI professional agencies, i.e., Interpretation Canada and the U.S. National Association for Interpretation;
- five museums/cultural sites, i.e., The Manitoba Museum, Sunnybrook Farm Museum, Rossland Museum and Discovery Centre, Kelowna Museums Society and Atlas Coal Mine National Historic Site;
- one planetarium, i.e., Ward Beecher Planetarium;
- one zoo, i.e., the Calgary Zoo;
- three non profit organizations, i.e., Sequoia Natural History Association, Milner Gardens and Woodland and Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation;
- two private companies, i.e., EcoLeaders Interpretation and CLK Consulting; and
- two anonymous sites.
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Table 2 *Summary of participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1: Spring VWC sessions</th>
<th>Active participants</th>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Geographic locations</th>
<th>Interests</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Front line interpreters: 2</td>
<td>Canada: 11, including:</td>
<td>Natural heritage: 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Supervisors: 5</td>
<td>• British Columbia 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Program managers: 10</td>
<td>• Alberta 5</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other: 1</td>
<td>• Manitoba 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Prince Edward Island 1</td>
<td>Combination of natural and cultural heritage: 13</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Geographic locations</td>
<td>United States: 7, including:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• North Carolina 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Colorado 2</td>
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<td>• Texas 1</td>
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<td>• Kansas 1</td>
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<td>• Nevada 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 2: LinkedIn</td>
<td>10 (including 3 new participants)</td>
<td>Front line interpreters: 3</td>
<td>Canada: 8, including:</td>
<td>Natural heritage: 5</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Supervisors: 2</td>
<td>• British Columbia 4</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Program managers: 5</td>
<td>• Alberta 3</td>
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<td>• Manitoba 1</td>
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<td>• Prince Edward Island 1</td>
<td>Combination of natural and cultural heritage: 0</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>United States: 2, including:</td>
<td>• Nevada 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• North Dakota 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 3: Fall VWC session</td>
<td>20 (including 12 new participants)</td>
<td>Front line interpreters: 6</td>
<td>Canada: 9, including:</td>
<td>Natural heritage: 7</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Supervisors: 4</td>
<td>• British Columbia 2</td>
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<td>Program managers: 10</td>
<td>• Alberta 5</td>
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<td>• Manitoba 1</td>
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<td>• Prince Edward Island 1</td>
<td>Combination of natural and cultural heritage: 1</td>
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<td>United States: 11, including:</td>
<td>• Colorado 1</td>
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<td>• Texas 1</td>
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<td>• Kentucky 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• California 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>33 different people in total</td>
<td>Front line interpreters: 10</td>
<td>Canada: 17 (51.5%) in total, including:</td>
<td>Natural heritage: 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Supervisors: 7</td>
<td>• British Columbia 5</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Program managers: 15</td>
<td>• Alberta 10</td>
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<td>Other: 1</td>
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<td>Cultural heritage: 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>United States: 16 (48.5%) in total,</td>
<td>Combination of natural and cultural heritage: 2</td>
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## Data Analysis

Data emerging through all collection methods, i.e., digital audio recordings, participant notes and graphic recordings, were organized and filed digitally in a safe and secure location. Digital audio recordings were transcribed by representatives from MaestroConference, who were required to sign research advisory letters. I carefully reviewed the transcripts while listening to the audio recordings three times and corrected the text as needed to ensure quality and accuracy (Poland, 1995). As I corrected the text I was mindful of transcription as a complex, interpretive act and sought to ensure the transcribed text was accurate to the audio recordings (Bird, 2005; C. Davidson, 2009; McLellan, MacQueen, & Neidig, 2003; Oliver, Serovich, & Mason, 2005).

After assessing four different qualitative data analysis software programs, i.e., ATLAS.ti, Dedoose.com, MAXQDA and NVivo, I selected NVivo (Version 10) as it seemed to meet the needs of the study. For example, NVivo was relatively easy to learn and use; provided for easily accessible memos, which were key to the analysis of the data; and provided for easy coding of different sections of the graphic recordings, which was also important to the study. I also had experience with NVivo through course work and this made it relatively simple for me to use. The transcribed and reviewed data was then placed in a working file in NVivo. Thirty six data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Ohio</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

heritage: 22 (67%)
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sources resulted; including 13 audio transcripts, nine sets of participant notes, eight LinkedIn folders, and six graphic recordings (see Appendix E).

The verified data was explored and codes and memos generated to gain familiarity with the information in an open coding method described in Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011). The textual data was reviewed three times and coded to both pre-determined and inductive codes in acknowledgment of my a priori understanding of the topic, as well as to the emerging concepts (Bradley, Curry, & Devers, 2007; Huberman & Miles, 2002; Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Themes/nodes and the draft results chapter were sent to participants for verification and I received feedback from three participants. After providing a few email reminders to all, I did not pursue participants any further as I did not want to bother them. Two of the three comments received consisted of positive reinforcement for the researcher and the one substantive comment has been incorporated into the results chapter. Data analysis and writing were guided by my integrity and ethical considerations; I reported findings that I considered to be both positive and negative and sought to ensure that all results were analyzed and reported as objectively as possible, regardless of whether they reflected my expectations or not (Li, 2008; Silverman, 2006).

As an AR project, the development of ideas by the participants was paramount; therefore, I analyzed the data at the group level and sought to create themes that were focused on group creations rather than focusing the analysis on individual contributions. The data analysis flowed from specific to broad levels (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011) as I developed broad codes and themes based on my determination of the concepts generated by the participants. I used
techniques to identify themes as described by Ryan and Bernard (2003), e.g., looking for repetition, indigenous categories, metaphors and analogies, transitions, similarities and differences, linguistic connectors, missing data, and theory-related material. NVivo was also used to seek word occurrence and co-occurrence, as well as words in context (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). The nodes created in NVivo may be found in Appendix F.

As I analyzed the data, duplications became apparent, due to the overlap between multiple data sources. For example, a topic may have shown up in the transcribed audio text, participant notes and the graphic recordings. I took this overlap into account while doing the analysis and used direct participant quotes from the transcriptions in the report, rather than second hand notes, with the exception of the fall VWC break-out groups when recordings were not available. The participant notes and graphic recordings were useful as they provided different perspectives on the topic and I was mindful of this as I reviewed them as data sources.

The analysis of the use of VWC as a research method was achieved through three means; namely, the use of a reflexive journal throughout the process, participant feedback received in response to specific questions I asked in the LinkedIn phase, and an assessment of the graphic recordings created in the spring and fall VWC sessions. The analysis of the VWC as a research method is described in Chapter Five.

**Delimitations and Limitations**

Overall, the research was North American-centric. As mentioned previously, the geographic boundaries used for the research were North America for ease of communication in English and minimal time zone differences, even though the online venue was used. The
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literature I reviewed was mainly from North America, and predominantly from American sources, since these are the most readily available. I tried to access journals from other countries but was restricted by not being a member of the various professional HI organizations.

Another boundary previously identified was the scope of the literature review content; which was limited to inspiration literature mainly from within the psychological field and HI literature that placed emphasis on visitor-oriented or new approaches. The literature review of the WC and VWC was limited to the brief discourse available.

The study was limited through involving professional interpreters only. In inviting participants through professional organizations I inadvertently took an agency-focused approach to the research, and while the scope of the study did not allow for the involvement of visitors, future research involving this group would be an interesting next step.

Another limitation in the study included my positionality as previously described. My background in HI has always been within the protected area setting and my interest is mainly natural heritage; these proclivities were evident in the examples I chose to use, especially within the literature review. The research methods were chosen as the best means of answering the research questions; however, my belief in dialogic social interaction, in which participants actively engage in meaning making, also directed my choices.

The number of participants and timing of the research were limitations. In addition to the 33 actual participants, another 35 people signed up to be involved and then were not able to participate. The 33 participants represent a small selection of professional interpreters and their input is not meant to represent all professional interpreters. The timing of the research phases
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was planned to involve interpretive professionals prior to and after the busy summer months with the VWC sessions while the LinkedIn phase took place over the summer. The LinkedIn phase was not as successful as I had hoped; likely due to the busy nature of HI in the summer months. Interpreters, as people who communicate orally in their work, may have been more inclined to participate in oral communication and less inclined to be involved in the written communication required in the LinkedIn phase.

The technology available for VWC existed but was a limitation. The system relied on the participants being able to access and use the technology, and having a strong internet connection for the duration of the VWC. Tools for increased engagement by participants during a VWC, such as Go-to-Meeting (www.gotomeeting.com), Google docs (www.docs.google.com) and a social webinar function (http://maestroconference.com/features) all exist; however, I was advised against using them, as the first two were deemed to be too distracting to participants, and the latter was in beta testing at the time. Luckily for future researchers the technology is changing and improving rapidly. As described in a later chapter, the fall VWC break out group recordings were corrupt and therefore, transcripts were not available; this placed a bias towards the results from the spring dialogue over the fall dialogue.

Finally, a major limitation to the study was the use of WC for research and the use of WC in its online format as it was a “newborn” and therefore suffered from growing pains. Literature for guidance on the method was nonexistent. Also, I had limited experience as a facilitator of WC in either face to face or online formats, although I have years of experience as a facilitator of collaborative planning and educational processes. Participants also likely did not have much
experience with the online meeting venue, and it is possible that the study format favoured younger, more technologically–oriented participants, resulting in older and more experienced interpretation professionals being underrepresented. Also, the second spring VWC was run as a focus group and not an actual WC due to the small group size. The lack of rotating groups in this session may have inhibited the creativity and cross pollination of ideas that are expected in a WC. Finally, the table hosts in both the spring and fall received little to no training in WC and the results may have suffered from a lack of cross pollination and free flowing dialogue.

The technological aspects associated with utilizing this method led to challenges and frustrations. For example, while the digital audio recordings for all the spring dialogue and the fall plenary sessions were clear and understandable; due to a technical glitch, the fall VWC break-out table group recordings were nonexistent. This lack of recordings meant that I was missing approximately 240 minutes of break-out group data from the fall VWC. As soon as this issue was reported to me by MaestroConference, I appealed to the participants to send me their notes from the discussions and I received write ups from 11 of the 15 participants. Reviewing their brief notes was helpful to me, but not a replacement to having the 240 minutes of break-out table group data to analyze. The study design and timing did not allow for another phase in which I presented the findings to the participants for further dialogue in a VWC format, although this extra step would have provided validation and possibly, action steps for participants.
Chapter Four: Results and Discussion

The discussions and text generated in research phases one to three, i.e., spring and fall VWCs and LinkedIn phase, in the form of participant stories, dialogue and submitted texts are laid out in this chapter in the following order:

- participant results related to inspiration in general and to the nine characteristics of inspiration as defined in the literature review;
- interpreter actions, including general actions interpreters could take and specific visitor-oriented actions;
- four emergent themes that were not found in the inspiration literature; and
- next steps.

Throughout the chapter I have made HI-specific ideas and discussion points a central focus and have made connections to the literature wherever feasible. While I aimed to generate mutually exclusive themes and characteristics there is no doubt some overlap between the categorizations.

In order to share as much as possible in the participant’s own words I have included a representative quote at the beginning of each section. Throughout the chapter any quotations not ascribed to an author are research participant words and when sharing multiple quotes by participants I have inset them as bullets, with each bullet listing the participant words verbatim. Whenever it seemed feasible I have included the number of times a concept was referenced and coded in NVivo, in order to provide some weighting to the concepts. I have not identified participants with pseudonyms as I believe this would be cumbersome with 33 participants, it
would favour the spring participants since there was more audio text for them, and the overall research purpose was targeted at the results of the dialogue and not at individuals.

Results Related to Inspiration Characteristics

In this section I share general findings related to inspiration as a concept, followed by results related to the nine characteristics of inspiration as outlined in the literature review and shown previously in Figure 2.

Inspiration as a concept.

“So we had some pretty great conversation, then also started to understand that this is a pretty complex, complex thing that we're discussing.”

In the spring VWC sessions participants were asked “what does the concept of inspiration mean to you?” In response, some of the participants made a point of referring to the literal meaning of inspiration, as noted by one participant “there’s something basic about inspiration, that breathing in, there's sort of (breathing sounds), that I don’t know, whether it’s just because that's how you feel when you breathe in or your brain feels that too.” In agreement with the inspiration literature, the participant’s referenced the literal meaning of inspiration first, and followed with points that indicated a more complex understanding of the concept. For example, throughout the conversations, participants, in their own words, identified inspiration as being:

- an ambiguous term to try to define;
- an ambiguous term that must be defined;
- similar to stewardship;
- complex;
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- a buzz word;
- a verb rather than just a noun;
- something that is taken in, deeper;
- vulnerable;
- something that drives the interpreter to hit head, heart and hands;
- something that used to be written about in interpretation 30 or 40 years ago;
- either true inspiration or flash in the pan inspiration; and
- something that starts with curiosity and ends with action.

**Inspiration is two-sided.**

“The large variation in reasons why visitors are here creates different reasons as to how they are inspired, and as such what they may be inspired to do.”

In keeping with the literature’s division of inspiration into the two moments of *inspired by* and *inspired to*, I asked participants specifically to address these two elements through the following questions. In the spring I asked “please describe one experience you have had in your work when you were inspired; when you were excited to be doing the work you do. What were you inspired by? What were you inspired to do?” In the fall I asked participating interpreters “what are audiences at your site inspired by, and what are they inspired to do? Please share recent stories from your site.”

**Interpreters are inspired by different sources.** Results of the dialogue indicated that interpreters are inspired in many ways, although the multitude of ideas divided into three main groupings; interpreters are inspired by a) people, b) places, including external objects and
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happenings in the environment, and c) participation, i.e., the actions interpreters take. These three groupings matched categories uncovered by inspiration researchers and are presented in order based on number of references per group. Table 3 provides a summary of the ideas.
### Table 3 Summary of sources of inspiration to interpreters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of inspiration</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. People</strong></td>
<td>1. Audiences:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• seeing their reactions at a program</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• engaging with them</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• involving them</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• modifying a program to meet their needs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• hearing from them after, especially about the impacts of the interpretation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• having more time with them</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Other interpreters:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• joining in other interpretation programs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• collaborating</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• engaging in dialogue</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• sharing stories</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• new staff members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Place, i.e., external objects and happenings in the environment</strong></td>
<td>1. The place:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• its features</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• its processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• its phenomena</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Life experiences:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• regular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• unexpected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C. Participation, i.e., actions interpreters take</strong></td>
<td>1. On the job actions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• participating in interpretive programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• developing a new program or interpretive plan</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• wearing a costume</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• editing a document</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• getting to choose their own topic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• taking a risk by trying something new</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• telling stories</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• supporting their staff</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• making something fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Learning:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• attending conferences and training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• sharing with other interpreters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• attending other interpreter’s programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• visiting other sites that offer interpretation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

The most commonly mentioned source of inspiration to interpreters was people (160 references). The two main sources of people-related inspiration were the audience and other interpreters. The most commonly discussed audience-based inspiration source was seeing or hearing the audience reactions to the interpretive experience. One interpreter passionately described seeing the light in the visitor’s eyes “as a field interpreter myself who looked at the light in the visitor’s eyes and knew that I reached them, I knew that I’d changed their life.” An interpretive manager pointed out that while she didn’t lead programs:

What I do love is, I always have my door open and there’s the gallery just outside my door, I love listening to the voices of people talking and noticing how the conversations have gotten better and the excitement of the visitors has gotten better.

One interpreter described being excited to hear of the impact he had:

My favourite is a praying mantis and I was doing a praying mantis station and in the middle of the afternoon here come a couple of 9 or 10 year old boys back who had been at the station and they had found a praying mantis who was pregnant and they said ‘We know you'll take good care of him’ and it just made me feel like, good they're listening to me, they're paying attention, hands-on experience, and that's what inspiration is all about.

Engaging with audience members was another source of inspiration to the interpreters. An interpreter described that at her site they were “looking at doing informal campfire chats that will be driven by the interest of the visitors.” And at another site, the participant exclaimed:
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We were trying to provoke interest without giving any information at all basically, but it was really trying to think about the audience and what they like and I found that quite inspiring actually and we had some great success with it.

And aiming to involve the audience inspired one interpreter to “structur[e] programs so that we're not necessarily the didactic authority but rather asking them what they're interested in, along a certain subject and involving them in provocative conversations.” And lastly, one interpreter was inspired by modifying a program to meet the needs of the audience “I was inspired by actually seeing some reaction by the kids and hearing stories from their aids that they were actually getting something out of it.”

Interpreters were also inspired by hearing from participants after the program, especially related to the impact the program had on the participants. For example “it is so great when either you have it in person or even when kids or a classroom sends letters or some sort of thank you. That is always a moment of inspiration and it gives you that sense of purpose.”

Interpreters were particularly inspired when they had more time with visitors and therefore were able to see changes, as in the case of a zoo visitor who returned regularly and the interpreter was inspired to see how excited he was by the wildlife. In another case, the interpreter was inspired by seeing a grandson growing over the years while visiting the site with his grandfather.

Overall, related to being inspired by audiences, interpreters, in their own words, seemed passionate about the inspiration that came from:

- helping people understand;
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- speaking with visitors;
- seeing families enjoy the experience;
- learning from the audience;
- helping the audience make connections to the place;
- giving students unstructured time to climb all over a rock since they’d never had a chance to climb all over a big rock before; and
- [hearing] some of the kids say ‘I wanna bring my kids here.’

Interpreters were inspired by the known impacts they have on visitors and this helped them continue to do their jobs. One of the table hosts summed it up when he explained “inspiration for all of us seemed to stem from the root that connecting people, having them build a sense of place and a sense of connectedness was what gave all of us a sense of inspiration.”

Interpreters were also inspired by other interpreters, including joining in other HI programs, collaboration, dialogue, and sharing stories. “I was really inspired by these other interpreters who were so passionate about this resource that I didn't yet really have a strong connection with.” One participant mentioned that she tried to reach interpreters from her past to let them know they had inspired her:

In my career, trying to inspire the people who inspire me, I’ve often taken the time to see if I could track them down even if it’s years later to reconnect with them and say ‘I was one of the groupies at every single interp program, went on all your walks and to say you made a big difference in my life.’
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Another participant shared how much her whole family was inspired by an interpreter during a museum visit 20 years ago:

He had nothing with him except the chair and himself and his voice. That was it.... 20 years later the whole family still recalls that experience and every one of us remembers the places we went and the things that he said and we all have different spots that stuck out for us and he managed to completely capture.

New staff members may also be a source of inspiration to interpreters who have been in the business for awhile:

The inspirational thing is, like everyone pretty much has talked about before us, the new staff that we got coming on and the fresh blood that's coming in with fresh eyes. That helps those that have been around awhile remember why we're here.

The second most common source of inspiration to interpreters was place, i.e., external objects or happenings in the environment (97 references). A common external source of inspiration was place, i.e., generally the site where they worked. Interpreters described being inspired by the place itself, for example, the amazing views and vistas and beauty of the site, as well as the site’s unique features, such as wildlife, mountain views, quiet and solitude, nature being all around, and phenomena or processes, such as the northern lights, beautiful weather, the night sky and nature at night. Making a connection to the site and developing a sense of place were important sources of inspiration. An interpreter described how he was inspired to develop a new program while being on site with his colleagues:
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I’m standing out on the beach with the two or three interpreters who were gonna be presenting this program throughout the season. I’m nervous about the topic and we get into this real neat conversation about all the different directions that we can take a night program like this with the sky, focused on some of the cultural history and the maritime history.

The next most commonly cited source of external inspiration was *regular life experiences* (not necessarily HI-related), including the birth of child, citizen science opportunities, a local special event, music, technology or a major incident like a flood. *Unexpected or new experiences* were also described as being sources of inspiration to interpreters. Examples showed that visiting a place for the first time, discovering something unique, and experiencing the unexpected could all be sources of inspiration. One participant described an amazing unexpected experience “I just happened to step outside on the deck of the ship and over above us was this amazing array of northern light and aurora activity” which led to “an unscripted, unplanned experience.”

The last group of triggers of inspiration included *participation, i.e., actions interpreters take*, e.g., participating in interpretive programming, developing a new program or interpretive plan, wearing a costume, editing a document, getting to choose their own topic, taking a risk by trying something new, telling stories, supporting their staff or making something fun (86 references). Interpreters were inspired by “creating a sense of surprise and freshness” and getting people “stepping out of their normal way of thinking and being.” Examples of actions interpreters take that inspired them, in their own words, included:
Every summer I go with an organization to the Arctic to teach teenagers about the effects of climate change on the polar religion and I think that also keeps me going.

They've reminded me to try some new programming and really forced me to wanna get back out there and do some programming again. That made me want to get back out and reconnect with the visitors and reconnect with programming and the whole idea as to why I got into this type of work.

Paying more attention to those inspirational and joyful moments, keeping track of that for myself and sharing those with my co-workers and other interpreters.

Interpreters were also inspired by learning, including attending conferences and training, reading, sharing with other interpreters and attending other interpreters’ programs or visiting other sites that offer HI. Typically, interpreters visit other sites on their own time; one participant talked about how she has visited over 94 national park sites “I always try to find a site near to me if I have to go somewhere for work, even on my own vacation I try to find where’s the closest park site that I could go to.” It was interesting to note that participants did not talk much about being inspired by learning from visitors; this may be a reflection of the perception that HI is mainly a one-way form of communication.

In summary, interpreters were inspired by people, places, and participation. The responses to this question were somewhat different than the inspiration literature in which sources of inspiration were determined to be either internal or external, with nature as one of the most commonly described source of inspiration, according to a study of college students (Hart,
1993). While nature may not have been identified as the main source of inspiration to the participants in this study; it was important to them as a component of place. In the HI profession, people are a strong focal point, and as a result, participants talked about being inspired themselves and inspiring their visitors. This resulted in the references to people exceeded the references to place.

The inspiration literature referred to the supernatural as a source of inspiration, including religious inspiration; however, participating interpreters did not mention religion, although they used spiritual terms to refer to inspiration. The literature suggested that inspiration requires being passive in order to receive the inspiration, although responses provided by the HI professionals suggested that being active took precedence; likely due to the fact that being active and encouraging action are part of an interpreter’s job. It is interesting to note that no research participants described being inspired by or inspiring others by being given or giving a lot of information in an organized and thematic manner, as in cognitive-based HI. One participant who commented on the draft results chapter did note that while the topic of theme did not come up in the group dialogue, she felt that “a well themed interactive program with elements that support each other led to greater inspiration.” She added “I do agree that there is a time and place for themes, and a time and place to toss out the theme and go with the flow.”

**Interpreters are inspired to different ends.**

“Especially if they’re sharing at the dinner table, you know you got them.”

In the spring and fall VWCs, I asked participants what they were inspired to and their responses showed that they were a) inspired to take actions themselves and b) to encourage
others, i.e., their visitors, to take actions. Table 4 provides a summary of what interpreters are inspired to.
Table 4 Summary of targets of inspiration for interpreters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targets of inspiration</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A. Taking action       | 1. Inspired to:  
|                        |   - be more inspired and enthusiastic  
|                        |   - undertake more interpretation  
|                        |   - improve program  
|                        |   - create memorable experience  
|                        |   - make the world a better place  |
| B. Encouraging         | 2. Inspiring visitors to:  
| visitors to take action|   - get involved  
|                        |   - take whatever action was the most meaningful for them  
|                        |   - choose a career  
|                        |   - create something  
|                        |   - do something easy such as click like on a social media outlet  
|                        |   - get out and experience more  
|                        |   - share with others  
|                        |   - go out and observe the stars on their own and be conscious of light pollution  
|                        |   - learn more  |

Interpreters were inspired to *take actions* themselves, including being more inspired and enthusiastic. In the words of three participants:

- I am inspired to remember why we’re here and why we do this;

- ...to be inspirational in all our work; and

- I believe the team is inspired to inspire our audiences.

Interpreters were also inspired to undertake more HI, especially if they were currently a supervisor or manager. These people were inspired to want to do more actual interpretation, since it provided a break from the required paperwork associated with their positions and brought them back in touch with why they were in the profession in the first place. The front line interpreters were inspired to improve their programs through actions such as choosing different topics, making their HI fit with a theme, telling more stories, and aiming to reach visitors at the
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emotional level. Interpreters were also inspired to learn more, to reconnect with others to let them know the impacts they made, and to try new things, i.e., take risks.

Lastly, interpreters were inspired to take actions to make the world a better place, and as one participant eloquently spoke “I've noticed that often true inspiration, not just flash in the pan inspiration, but some of the more true light moments, they inspire me to action of some sort and I think that is something we should remember with our visitors.” They also sought to create memorable experiences for their visitors, although one participant was adamant that it was not enough just to help the visitors have a memorable experience “we need to look beyond just providing that pleasurable experience, that internal inspiration, ‘Oh this feels good! This is great!’ In our visitors… have them take the next step, which is to have them act upon these experiences.”

Interpreters were also inspired to encourage their visitors to take action:

They could've just had an experience with no provoked action after it; then it would go away as most of our memories do, wherever it is not usable. What we're trying to get people to do is something as a result of having experiences, not just single experiences, but multiple experiences, in our venues.

Another interpreter described:

When I do formally plan a program, there’s always an action thing and I do think you have to inspire people a little bit if you hope to get them to change any behaviour on their own or change their own attitudes or however you think about that kind of thing. If you’re looking for change I think inspiration might need to be part of it.
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Visitors inspired by and to. In the fall VWC I asked the participants what they believed their visitors were inspired by and to. Regarding what *visitors are inspired by*, results from the dialogue indicated that HI professionals believed visitors were inspired by a variety of sources that matched the same three categories as the interpreter’s sources of inspiration, i.e., people, places and participation. Interpreters felt that engaging with people inspired visitors and that “people inspire more than interpretive panels.” “And everybody definitely agreed that when the visitors come here they’ll make that, *wow* moment, that inspiration, but it’s further enhanced through a personal connection.” They felt that visitors were inspired by the HI they took part in; one interpreter summed it up when she said “visitors are inspired by the expectation to see stars and the way they are interpreted for them.” While interpreters were inspired by the audiences and other interpreters, they felt that audience members were inspired by interpreters and did not mention that audience members might be inspired by other audience members. External sources of inspiration for audiences included the place and phenomena associated with the site; for example, rutting elk, connecting with animals, enjoying botanical gardens, and viewing the night sky. Interpretive exhibits were considered to be a source of inspiration to visitors. Interpreters also felt that visitors were more inspired when the site was new to them:

> I think people can be inspired by things that are outside their usual experience, and have discovered that people can be inspired by things that we have come to take for granted because we see them every day, so we should be careful not to forget those things.

One interpreter shared how she was amazed:
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While leading a group of parks professionals from across North America on a walk in a forest of trees that I thought of as average height but they marveled at the size because there are no trees as tall as that where they are from.

Lastly, interpreters felt that actions visitors take may be a source of inspiration to them and the action-oriented sources of inspiration discussed included learning, being actively involved, having the interpretive experience tailored to them, having an opportunity to understand something new and having the experience connect with something in their lives; as described by one participant “audiences are inspired by connections that affect them in their daily life.” Interpreters also believe that visitors are inspired by something memorable, for instance, creating nostalgia with family members. One participant noted “we try to give them something memorable to take home, such as a catchy song.”

Regarding what interpreters believed visitors to their sites were inspired to, results from the dialogue indicated that HI professionals believed visitors were inspired to learn more, be engaged, discover and care, and have wow moments. They also hoped that visitors would take actions for the betterment of the world, i.e., recycling cell phones, being conscious of light pollution, making changes that are tangible and practical, considering the impact of their daily activities that can affect a watershed, beginning to be aware that they could enjoy nature at home, and taking the next step to do some conservation action. One participant explained “we don't have to work to provide the base inspiration, but we do have to work to nurture it and we always urge the audience to ‘go out and see for yourself’ the wonders of the sky.” And finally, as one
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interpreter succinctly stated, she hoped visitors were inspired at “two levels--inspired to discover and inspired to care.”

Many of the participant responses regarding what they and their visitors are inspired by and inspired to fit within the instrumental education-based approach in HI, which uses learning and experience as a basis for visitor actions and behaviour changes. Having interpreters really step away from the status quo and consider inspiration-based programming that is not focused on information first may be a challenging but rewarding undertaking.

**Connection between inspired by and to.** Dissecting inspiration into the two sides of inspired by and inspired to is useful as it reminds us that inspiration has these two critical components; however, it is important to also consider the two sides in concert. Appendix G includes summaries of the participant narratives showing the inspired by and inspired to sides next to each other. An assessment of the stories revealed that the inspired to side naturally matches up with the inspired by side. For example, after being inspired by hearing a great presenter, the interpreter was inspired to improve her program to have better connections with visitors, and after being inspired by reading or hearing about HI at other sites, the interpreter was inspired to try new things in his program. Figure 5 is an updated version of the Figure 3 yin yang diagram indicating the two sides of inspiration in the HI context. This diagram shows the importance of people, place and participation on the one side and actions and being on the other. Going forward, it will be important to keep this connection between the two sides of inspiration in mind when considering visitor inspiration through HI.
Overall, the research results associated with this first characteristic of inspiration were consistent with the inspiration literature in many respects, with a few differences to note. Interpreters being inspired by *people* was similar to the inspiration literature in which exemplary others were listed as sources of inspiration; however, respondents being inspired by audience members is unique to the field of HI and other contexts in which a presentation is given; this was not identified within any inspiration research uncovered. Interpreters being inspired by *place* or objects in the *external environment* was similar to the inspiration literature, i.e., the inspiration literature described external sources of inspiration as being nature and other external objects,
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while the interpreters referenced being inspired by place and events. Interpreters being inspired by *taking action* is unique to HI and other helping professions, and was not described in the inspiration literature; in which the inspired by side of inspiration was characterized by passivity. This may be reflective of the active nature of the work of an interpreter, i.e., interacting with visitors is a key component of the job. Interpreters are usually hired for their people skills and are typically energized by working with people.

Regarding what interpreters were *inspired to* through inspiration, respondents *taking action* themselves was consistent with the inspiration literature, in which inspired people were often inspired to take action. Interpreters being inspired to encourage *others to take action* is a concept associated with the education field in general, as well as the specific context of HI, although the inspiration literature I reviewed did not address in detail encouraging others to take action as a result of being inspired. As an agency-provided service, HI is often tasked with trying to change visitor behaviours; therefore, interpreters were inspired to encourage their visitors to make changes (Benton, 2009). However, inspiration may not manifest until the future and as one participant noted “someone can be inspired maybe, I don't know, a year down the road, when they’re like ‘whoa’! You know, they finally remember something and now had that something else to connect the meaning to.” Participants pointed out that we don’t really know what visitors are *inspired to* and we would need to have a feedback mechanism in place in order to become more familiar with changes visitors take after an experience in HI, e.g., by being in touch with them after their visit and asking, for example “what changes were you inspired to make after visiting the site or participating in the interpretation?”
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Inspiring visitors to do something is encouraged within HI, e.g., program objectives usually include a “call to action”, i.e., what the interpreter/agency would like to see the visitor do after participating in an interpretive experience. This strategy is a direct reflection of the instrumental knowledge-based approach taken in HI and may not consider what the visitor wishes to do after. Instead of a one-way transmission of suggestions for actions to take, a two-way dialogue between the interpreter and visitor may be one way to resolve this dilemma, with the interpreter providing the place-based information and grounding that the visitor may lack.

The inspired to just be concept was only mentioned briefly by the research participants, although it was discussed in Hart’s dissertation on inspiration (1993). I have included it in Figure 5 to seek to have it given due consideration within inspiration-based HI.

Inspiration is transcendent.

“Inspiration is something that takes me outside of myself. I can get kinda caught up in the day to day and suddenly something comes along that just takes me right out of there to another level.”

The second characteristic of inspiration is transcendence and in keeping with this point, participants described inspiration as a “flash of creativity” and “an impulse to do something or an impulse to think at a different level or from a different angle.” The idea that inspiration is something that takes a person outside themselves and lifts them to a different level was raised by a few participants. For example “it’s that moment when you have the broader or the deeper view, right, like as if you’re standing on a mountaintop, looking out, and you have the whole world laid
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before you.” Through inspiration there is hope that people will be transformed after participating
in HI, as described by an interpreter:

I think something that seems common between all our conversations is this idea that
there's some sort of transformation that's occurring through inspiration, you are not quite
exactly the same person you were before and after this moment of inspiration.

Another interpreter explained that through an inspirational experience “you have
experienced something that as a result of, you are no longer the same, whether it's in how you
think, feel, say or do, something's changed.”

Inspiration involves going to a new level; as described by an interpreter playing an
historical character:

It was a magical program, just being in the wood at night with lanterns, and everybody
would be focused entirely on me and there were nights when I used to really feel like I
was channelling her personality. I don’t know, it was just I lost myself, I would just be
her.

A magical experience described by another interpreter also showed how inspiration
involved going to a new level:

It was like a visitation and all of us held our breath as he flew low over our heads and
then towards the river and it was just the perfect coming together of this visitation with
the group. We were having a wonderful time already and then this happened, and I think
everybody was lifted to another level and the program became a lot more meaningful. It
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wasn't just fun and learning about nature after that, we all kind of had stars in our eyes for a minute.

Maslow’s hierarchy was referenced 10 times, mainly focused on inspiration being transformative and taking people to a higher level, although one participant noted that a person may not be inspired if they are concerned with basic needs. He stated “if I’m distracted by, I just had to file for bankruptcy, and I’m sitting there looking on this beautiful sunset and I’m probably not inspired by the beautiful sunset.” Another participant responded “maybe it’ll [the sunset] give you a sense of calm and feeling that tomorrow will be another day.”

The points raised by the research participants mesh with those in the inspiration literature, where inspiration is seen to be something magical, transformational and out of the ordinary. In a few of the examples provided, the inspiration manifested in a passive response, i.e., an overall change in being, rather than a specific action, similar to Hart’s (1998) description of inspiration as either “form”, i.e., an action or creation, or “being”, i.e., our general state of existence.

Inspiration is positive.

“I feel like inspiration has a positive dimension and an uplift dimension to it.”

The idea that interpreters need to be positive in order to be inspirational was mentioned a few times by a few participants, for instance “[we] make sure that in our professional communication, in our work groups, in all our communication that we come about it in a positive way, that we come about it with inspiration behind us.” Being positive also involved seeking to create a positive experience for the audience, even when the interpreter knew that the visitors may be in conflict with the agency’s messages:
How do you engage that visitor and inspire them, when you know they come with the things that inspire them and are really important to them are possibly in conflict with what you're thinking, you're about to present in your program, and how do you make that a positive experience for them and for you?

The idea that inspiration is positive and provocation is negative was discussed by one of the break-out groups. Initially, one participant pointed out that provocation, not inspiration, was the goal of interpretation at her site, which was focused on telling the ongoing stories of a social issue:

At our site we interpret the civil rights movements and there are a number of dark moments in the history of that and there are echoes of that reverberating in society today. So, while I would hope people come away from our interpretation with an inspiration to act, in the first place I just hope they are provoked.

This notion was countered by a participant from a planetarium who indicated that his site was definitely centred on inspiration with the solar system as the focus. These polarities led the group to discuss the idea that inspiration is associated with positive stories and provocation with negative stories and I have picked up on the concept of provocation later in the emergent themes section.

Overall, the respondents’ belief that inspiration in HI was positive fits with the inspiration literature assessment of inspiration as a mainly positive concept. As described in the literature review, inspiration is often linked with gratitude and it would be interesting to know if feelings
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of gratitude result from HI and lead visitors to be more connected to a site and more likely to care for it.

Inspiration is individual.

“How we could tell whether someone has been inspired and we realized that it’s really hard to tell because it’s so individual.”

The fourth characteristic of inspiration recognizes that inspiration is widespread and yet, individual. Participants acknowledged that inspiration as a term is commonly used and one participant referred to it as a “buzz word.” Respondents indicated that the inspiration of visitors may not be visible to the interpreter as it may not manifest until later, if at all, and it may be internal and therefore never visible. Participants were in agreement with the inspiration literature in regards to the notion that inspiration was very individual and possibly hidden, as described in their words below:

- We are dealing with individuals – not measured by numbers; results are within a single individual mind.
- It is difficult to tell if individuals are inspired [since it is] hard to see from outside, as it is so internal.
- It’s a pretty challenging concept to kinda wrap your head around because inspiration means different things to different people [and] what's gonna be inspirational for one person might, might be exact opposite to somebody else, so it's complicated.
For me inspiration is interesting because different people are inspired to do different things, at different times and in different ways.

Everyone is different and not everyone is artistic, but people will be inspired in different ways.

Meeting the inspirational needs of the different individuals posed a challenge to interpreters. For instance, one participant noted that she was frustrated when she had to meet curriculum needs, but personally felt that the students would be more inspired by exploring and playing. Another participant acknowledged that it was a challenge to meet all the individual needs since there was a “large variation in reasons why visitors are here” and there are “different reasons as to how they are inspired, and as such what they may be inspired to do.”

Participants, in their own words, were adamant that interpreters cannot force inspiration on their audiences:

But inspiration really depends more on the visitors' frame of mind.

But the inspiration is up to the member of the audience, they're the ones that control that.

We could facilitate inspiration but it was hard to actually take people there, it was up to the people who were experiencing the programs to have that inspiration, to lead them up to it, put all the steps in place.

You know not everyone wants to, not everybody’s interested in what we have on tomorrow night. I tell people about it and their like ‘yeah, maybe, I’ll be doing something else.’
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Respondents believed that inspiration within HI is individualized and may be internal, similar to the findings of inspiration researchers within the psychology field.

**Inspiration is unexpected.**

“A common thread was, I think, our most inspiring moments were actually those moments when you didn't expect it to happen.”

Participants’ references to inspiration as being mainly unexpected were in harmonization with the inspiration literature and the topic was referenced multiple times. One participant described how inspiration started with an unknown and then grew from there “I think there's a shallow/unknowing infatuation that comes first; but a deeper appreciation, love, that is cultivated with a better understanding.” Participants noted that it was important to be open to the inspiration and they described this as allowing yourself to be vulnerable or stepping out of your normal way of thinking. One participant seemed delighted by “the sheer randomness that such inspiration can come upon us.” In summarizing the group discussion, a participant said “a common thread was our most inspiring moments were actually those moments when you didn't expect it to happen.”

A point that was raised a few times in the discussion was the idea that inspiration was most likely to manifest when people were experiencing something new or out of routine. In summarizing his group’s stories, one participant noted “both of these have been in situations where you were taken out of your normal routine.” The interpreters’ stories of inspiration were peppered with examples in which the participants were experiencing something for the first time, e.g., watching children experience a live sunrise instead of seeing it on Google, watching children stare into the giant maw of an extinct volcano or visiting a national park for the first
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time, noticing children experiencing that the desert is alive, observing youth being out of the
country for the first time, taking students for new experiences into the swamps, discussing with
staff a new program on a beach at night, having a guest along who shared personal stories
connecting their family members to the historic site, and taking children out of their comfort
zone by leading them on their first camping trip. The point was raised that visitors to interpretive
sites may be on holidays and therefore more open to the unexpected and thus to inspiration.

The inspiration literature referred to inspiration as being evoked, or out of a person’s
control. Interpreters’ examples indicated that they were inspired by watching others experiencing
new situations, as well as experiencing new and unexpected situations themselves. The state of
being out of control was not addressed by the participants; this is perhaps reflective of the felt
need of the interpreters to be in control as part of their job responsibilities.

Inspiration is holistic.

“In a practical sense, making inspiration a goal reminds us what we are trying to achieve.
It may help a team dig deeper and reach higher. It also reminds us that we humans are
motivated by emotions more than knowledge.”

Inspiration seems to involve a holistic component, including emotional and spiritual
connections to place and/or to other people. The emotional component in inspiration was
referenced a number of times throughout the research. For example, four different participants
shared stories in which they felt connected or bonded with other people during the moment of
inspiration. Their stories included enjoying the northern lights together with a group of students
on a ship in the Arctic, connecting with interpretive staff while standing on a beach at night,
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watching the ongoing bonding between a grandfather and grandson over the years, and bonding at the workplace as they worked together to achieve mutual goals. One interpreter questioned:

What is this thing called inspiration? Is it a cognitive thing or is it an emotional thing? I keep coming back to the emotional side of it. The reason it is so important, the reason it's so valuable is because the emotions are really the trigger for coding in the brain to get things into the long term memory so that they are actually are usable. So what we're trying to create are these safe places where those emotional connections can be made but then can lead to cognitive remembrance.

Interpreters also discussed the need to reach people at the emotional level in order for inspiration to occur:

We can create that emotional connection first through things like the tools, just like storytelling, and then you can put in the facts and the information that we wanna get across in a way that people get engaged, they connect before you can even start to move people to some kind of an action or change of mind.

One participant warned against having a canned program, in which the interpreter was not emotionally invested:

I'm sure most of us have probably seen a program like that where you know this is the person having to give a canned program or something that [they’re] not really into. It'll show… hopefully we have the freedom to be able to develop your own programs…you have some way of giving that personal heart of you to your audience, then that's what they're gonna latch onto and it's that emotional that leads to the inspiration.
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As described by one interpreter, inspiration “takes you out of your mind, closer to your emotions, your feelings.” Another participant added that is it the love interpreters put into programs that leads to inspiration:

I know how I am effective and I think it's my heart love that makes me effective...there's something about hearts that we interpreters put out there in order to bring people along and share that amazingness, and get people excited.

One participant expressed his concern with inspiration being solely an emotional state and pointed out that in HI we have to go beyond inspiration as an emotion. He said “inspiration by itself is just a state of being but what is the reason…what is the purpose, what is the objective of that inspiration?”

Participating interpreters also described the spiritual side of inspiration:

I read Tilden as an interpreter in my first season, and so those things still resonate with me… he talked about spiritual uplift and the enrichment of the human mind and spirit and those two things I have in mind when I think about inspiration as it relates to interpretation.

Another participant agreed:

Yeah, I kind of identify, I guess, with what was said about there being a spiritual component to inspiration as well and that it may not be in an identifiable box with a particular label on it, but when I’ve been inspired by an interpretive experience is often an experience of feeling connected to other people, connected to myself, connected to the
world around me, part of something bigger, that is one larger whole and for me that is a very spiritual concept.

One participant raised the point that she believed inspiration involves the sublime: There’s something there… which is the spiritual uplift, the enrichment of human mind and spirit. Those are the things that Tilden talked about too and there’s the word sublime, what did I hear it called? ‘Appetite for the sublime’ and what is this sublime?

One idea that resulted from the discussions involved the notion that inspiration involves spirit, which is something different than heart and head “some of that is spirit, it’s not just heart it’s not just mind, there’s something that touches. There’s something about being touched as the inner person or lifted as the inner person that is inspiration.”

Interpreters responses agreed with the inspiration literature that inspiration is holistic and involved emotional and spiritual components, and that information may need to be secondary. The conative side of holistic inspiration, i.e., people taking action after, was discussed in the inspired to section of this chapter, although participants did not talk about the need for technical proficiency prior to successfully taking action, as identified in the inspiration literature. Within inspiration-based HI the role of the interpreter may need to be more focused on providing visitors with technical proficiency to enable them to take their chosen action after.

**Inspiration is transmissible.**

“If inspiration is a goal in what we do then we get this whole vicious cycle of interpretation where you get inspired by what you do, inspire visitors, they are inspired to
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inspire other people and share their experiences and it just keeps snowballing or building
on itself.”

Participating interpreters, in their own words, indicated being inspired by being inspired,
and felt that being inspired may be contagious and lead to more inspiration, in a cycle:

- If we are not inspired ourselves it is not going to happen.
- I guess that’s where my head is, that you’ve got to be inspired yourself in order to try
  help others find that inspiration.
- In order to try to help a visitor or someone else be inspired, meant that you had first
to be inspired.

Participating interpreters saw inspiration as a cycle in which their inspiration led to
visitor inspiration, which then led to increased inspiration for the interpreters, similar to the
magnetized links in a chain analogy described in the inspiration literature by Thrash and Elliot
(2004).

**Inspiration requires receptivity.**

“The key is that the recipient of the interpretation must be receptive to that engagement.”

Participants, in their own words, discussed that people need to be receptive to inspiration,
showing similarities with the inspiration literature:

- And talk about your interpretive opportunity, if they’re hungry for that and you have
  figured out a way to make that happen. Hooray! And if they’re hungry for that and
  you haven’t taken the time to figure out how to make that happen, then shame on you.
I think that Dad and his son were looking for something bigger, different, new, new direction.

The research participants did not discuss that some people are likely more receptive to inspiration, as identified in the psychological research into trait inspiration, i.e., exhibiting certain traits such as intrinsic motivation may predispose people to being inspired. As described above, research participants noted that interpreters themselves needed to be open to inspiration, i.e., “we have to be inspired ourselves.”

Inspiration receptivity may be cultivated.

“A point that was made is that, it's sort of the whole, it's a whole basis of interpretation, it’s what we do, is to help participants be receptive to inspiration.”

As described in the inspiration literature, inspiration cannot be forced, but it may be wooed (Hart, 1998). The topic of receptivity to inspiration was discussed informally in the first two phases of the research and directly in the third phase, in response to the question “as we talked about in the spring VWCs, inspiration cannot be forced upon people; however, it may be cultivated. How could interpreters help participants be receptive to inspiration?” The many ideas generated on this topic within the three research phases were multi-faceted and complex, and seemed to fit into two key themes; namely, ideas that focused on actions interpreters could take, and ideas for visitor-oriented HI. These two themes were important to the participants and provide useful advice to the HI field.
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Interpreter Actions to Cultivate Inspiration

“And you have to be feeling strong as an interpreter, cause you’re dancing out into uncharted territory when you do that. You’re goin’ out where risks are taken, but oh, is it worth it.”

The next two sections focus on the actions that interpreters could take to cultivate receptivity to inspiration. The first section includes general actions interpreters could take, summarized in Table 5, and the second section presents specific visitor-oriented suggestions, summarized in Table 6. Figure 6 is a mind map summary of the concepts covered in both tables.
General actions taken by interpreters.

“I think if inspiration was, was my only goal, it would be much more me dropping the planning and responding to what the kids are interested in.”

General actions interpreters could take to cultivate receptivity to inspiration are summarized in Table 5, including a selection of participant quotes. See Appendix H for a more detailed version of the table.
**Table 5 General interpreter actions for cultivating receptivity to inspiration in HI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpreter Actions</th>
<th>Participant Quotes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do interpretation, with fundamentals as base</td>
<td>“This is all about the basics of interpretation. It is what we do. You need to be able to read your audiences, know techniques for drawing shy people out and managing know-it-alls. More experience dealing with people makes you more effective.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Referenced 36 times)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Tell the stories, whether about the building or people or about the animals that we have here or we used to have here on site.”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan, but be flexible</td>
<td>“Planning allows us to answer the question, ‘what are we trying to achieve in interpretation?’ ‘what is the purpose, what is the objective of that inspiration?’”</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Referenced 28 times)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Save the plan if something else happens, if something else is interesting to the group, you would be able to put the plan away.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take risks</td>
<td>“Inspired to take more risks in doing that type of program and not always relying on being cute and funny and being able to do things that are a bit more dramatic, serious and emotional.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Referenced 21 times)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“It takes a lot of courage too and experience, to try to do it in a way that gets more deeper connections and better results.”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Learn, including networking and visiting other sites</td>
<td>“When I first started doing this I didn’t realize that there were other people like me and they wanted to talk to each other so I’m really excited to be part of this.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Referenced 19 times)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“There are a few organizations like the National Association for Interpretation in the States or Interpretation Canada and lots of ways to connect...especially with the advent of all the technology online these days.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have a positive attitude and share the passion</td>
<td>“I’m like many interpreters where it’s woven into the fabric of everything you do, whether it’s work or play.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Referenced 7 times)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“We’re all about the profession; every interpreter I’ve met is so passionate about what they do.”</td>
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</tr>
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Note: figures in Interpreter Action column represent approximate times action was referenced in NVivo coding.
In summary, Table 5 reflects the participants’ beliefs that to inspire visitors, interpreters really just need to be doing their jobs well, including using fundamentals, such as storytelling and group management, planning but being flexible, taking risk, learning and having a positive attitude. The first row in Table 5, interpreting with fundamentals in mind, provides a lead in to the contents of Table 6, specific visitor-oriented actions.

Visitor-oriented actions.

“The conversation went on that perhaps rather than focusing on the curriculum for formal program that we're delivering or those key messages, within reason, that the parks wants us to deliver, how about wanting to be responding to what the visitors are asking for and what the visitor is moved by.”

Taking a visitor-oriented approach to HI may cultivate receptivity to inspiration and I have summarized the participant’s ideas in Table 6 in rank order starting with the highest referenced themes resulting from the participant dialogue and from the literature review. I have selected a few participant quotes per theme and a full version of the table may be found in Appendix I.
### Table 6 Visitor-oriented recommendations resulting from literature themes and participant discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes from Literature Review</th>
<th>Participant Quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Engage visitors in active involvement. (Referenced 37 times) | Involving them “gives the visitor a **sense of ownership** over their conclusions and therefore inspires them to take their own actions.”
| | “More and more I think people participate these days when they can contribute to a **two-way exchange** of ideas and information, rather than simply being the recipients of information, interpretation and inspiration.”
| | “Structuring programs so that we're not necessarily the didactic authority but rather asking them what they're interested in and involving them in **provocative conversations** is a good way to make sure they see the relevance and walk away inspired.”
| 2. Foster connections to places and people’s lives. (Referenced 36 times) | “Really making sure that the story that we're telling is **unique to that location** within the park so that they can realize that, ‘wow, I'm learning something here that I might not learn anywhere else,’ so that's totally unique to here and as I'm creating my own story by experiencing this place.”
| | “Even the most distant of visitor should be able to relate the concept of an exhibit or activity through **something they have back home**.”
| 3. Be inclusive and respectful of individuality. (Referenced 29 times) | “What's gonna be inspirational for one person might be **exact opposite** to somebody else.”
| | “So that they feel **inclusive**, making people feel included in the group.”
| | “Just like we want respect for ourselves, making sure that we are giving that same **respect to everyone** we're communicating with.”
| 4. Invite emotions in. (Referenced 23 times) | “Inspiration drives us strive to hit that **sweet spot** where all three (head, heart, hands) overlap and we have the greatest impact.”
| | “Through activities that are more in the artistic realm, like doing photography, some sort of art, getting
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| 5. Know the audience. | “Connecting with your audience by trying to **get to know them in advance**, in the case of education, talking to teachers and students and then adjusting your messages for their level and their life experiences that they already have, being able to read your audience.”
| (Referenced 22 times) | “So obviously there is a need to **know your audience** and make that program more about facilitating conversation and answering their questions and providing opportunities to explore.” |

| 6. De-centre the interpreter. | “I think really you’re much more of a **facilitator** than an educator when you’re looking to have inspiration be your goal.”
| (Referenced 21 times) | “Let the **resource speak for itself**.” “Exactly! We’re the interpreters, not the resource.” |

| 7. Consider interpretation an ongoing process. | “They found teachers upon **repeat visits** would actually have a better experience each time for their class because they’d learn more and more and more.”
| (Referenced 20 times) | “One thing in our park that I’d love to be able to change... would be to get people more involved in doing things like going out and **monitoring and helping** with the various activities and contributing I think that would be a way of increasing inspiration.” |

| 8. Promote mindfulness in visitors and staff. | “And to be yourself and be in the moment yourself, so that they will want to **jump in with you** as well.”
| (Referenced 9 times) | Visitors “need to be **ready in some way**, where they’re open to it.” |

| 9. Encourage meaning making. | “Giving them actual examples and letting them **come to their own conclusions** seems to work better than just hitting them over the head with the proverbial hammer, saying ‘This is bad!’”
| (Referenced 8 times) | “It might be neat to be the one to ask the question completely open ended, **any answer is correct**.” |

| 10. Reduce cognitive focus. | “It was a completely new experience for me because it was trying to **provoke interest without giving any information** at all basically, but it was really trying to think about the audience and what they like.”
| (Referenced 4 times) | “But it could also be thinking about it in a way that affects your attitudes, or affects your values or affects other things **beyond the cognitive**.” |
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In summary, Table 6 shows that engaging visitors in active involvement and fostering connections were the themes that showed the greatest convergence between the HI literature and participants’ recommendations on how to cultivate inspiration, represented by the highest number of references (37 and 36 references respectively). Being inclusive and respectful, inviting in emotions, knowing the audience, de-centreing the interpreter, and considering interpretation as an ongoing process were the next most referenced themes; each received between 20 and 29 references. Promoting mindfulness and encouraging meaning making received 9 and 8 references respectively. The theme with the least convergence with the literature was reducing cognitive focus, as participants did not talk about reducing information although they did not talk at length about the importance of information either.

De-centreing the interpreter in favour of the visitor was an idea expressed by a few participants; however, one interpreter expressed concern with this idea and shared:

When I [first] read about it, it was just like a slap on the face, I just thought you’ve got to be kidding. This is our spirit, this is our joy, and this is our everything. Why are you saying we have to put a muzzle on?

A suggestion worth noting, made by one participant and supported by others, was to offer unique and different options for visitors in an effort to delight visitors with the unexpected. As explained by the participant “give them a different experiences where they’re connected to something they’re not usually connected to, whether it’s time or that enormous mountain or that tiny yellow bug.” The idea is to “jolt people out of a sense of complacency and create a sense of amazement and wonder” by recognizing “we’re all kind of kids inside and we all react to the
same invitation to surprise and delight.” The idea of inspiration being unexpected was found in the inspiration literature; and that interpretation should involve the unexpected may be found in some of the HI literature (Ham, 1992; Moscardo, 1999). The importance of keeping wonder alive was advocated by Rachel Carson in her book *The Sense of Wonder* (1956) in which the author encouraged parents and teachers to help each child maintain their inborn sense of wonder. The participants were in agreement with Carson’s recommendations when they advocated for maintaining the sense of wonder through inspiration in HI. The idea of presenting the unexpected was referenced 25 times, showing that it was of interest to the participants. Options presented by the participants, in their own words, for unique and different ideas to try in HI included, using:

- social media;
- citizen science;
- hands-on activities, such as ‘eye in the sky’ where participants hold a mirror and look into it to walk a trail;
- the arts;
- puppetry, drama, pottery, music;
- first time experiences or unique experiences for those who have already had experiences, to change their perspective; and
- the creation of experiences as a whole and not just individual programs.

As a summary, Figure 7 shows the characteristics of inspiration in HI with specific interpretation-related components as discussed by the research participants highlighted in yellow.

Throughout the dialogue on cultivating receptivity, it was pointed out by a few participants that
what we do in HI is cultivate inspiration; therefore, the items in Tables 5 and 6 and Figure 7 may be considered best practices for HI.
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Figure 7 Mind map showing inspiration in HI with interpretation-specific points in yellow

Emergent Themes

Four themes that were not found in the inspiration literature emerged through the dialogue. These emergent themes were related to inspiration within the HI context and include agency-related issues, measuring inspiration in HI, the role of provocation, and the overall role of inspiration within HI.

Agency-related issues.

“We all know we have to answer to someone, to management to budgets and to whatever it is with our agency.”

HI is usually an agency-supported program and thus interpreters are accountable to their agency and subject to the agency’s direction and needs. The topic of agency-related concerns was a major point of discussion for the participants and it showed up in at least 20 of the 36 data sources. In total, agency-related concerns were referenced 94 times, not counting any references to the topic of measurement. After analyzing the spring VWC dialogue and noting the focus on agency-related concerns, I specifically asked the following question in the fall VWC “how could...
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we meet the needs of our agencies while focusing on inspiring visitors?” One group flipped the question and discussed “what could agencies do to help interpreters inspire visitors”, rather than what could interpretation do to meet the needs of the agencies. They determined that it came down to “taking interpretation and actually applying it internally to get people to see the value of interpretation to get your agency to start valuing interpretation so they can start giving you the resources in helping you get there.” In another table group the participants commented that interpretation meeting agency needs should already be occurring. For example:

The answer seemed very obvious. In all cases, needs are met by providing good quality exhibits and programs that are interpreted by trained, knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff. If an institution provides that, then all needs of all ‘agencies’ should be met.

Participating interpreters were aware that they were representatives of their organizations and must consider the needs of their agencies in everything they do. There was consensus that the needs of the agencies were diverse and always changing, since the various agencies had different mandates and visions. The specific needs of agencies that had to be met, in the words of the participants, included:

- making revenue;
- heading towards stewardship;
- being relevant to the community;
- tying into curriculum to meet teachers’ needs and making it interesting to meet students interests;
- fostering repeat visitation;
- providing behavioural goals for visitors to follow;
- protecting the health of the ecosystem;
- balancing budgets;
- training staff;
- creating healthy and sustainable communities;
- encouraging learning and caring about parks;
- connecting the agency to the visitors;
- measuring successes; and
- inspiring visitors.
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Four different sources of agency-related frustration were described by the participants and are summarized in Table 7. First, achieving agency goals was a source of aggravation. In some cases, the lack of clear goals was described as an issue, as shown by this example:

I think it’s really helpful in any organization if you have a very strong shared sense of what you are together trying to accomplish and that is part of everything you do and not just a part of interpretation.

In another case, new agency direction was a source of frustration as it meant the interpreter had to redo all her materials to match the new goals. Meanwhile, for another interpreter the lack of goals was welcome as it gave her the freedom to choose topics to interpret.

Secondly, frustration existed if the values of an organization did not align with the interpreter’s. For example, one participant was adamant that the goal of HI was to create safe environments for visitors and staff, and it seemed that his opinion on the goal of the organization was not in line with the organization’s goal. His frustration was evident as he exclaimed “specific issues here. Ugly stuff, don't wanna go into it.” Another participant described the importance of values:

That's why going back and looking at our values system, looking at the values as to why we do things, whether individually, whether aligned in an organization, that we have a clear idea of what we are trying to achieve, to the betterment of our communities or our society, to the dedication of the passing on of legacy.
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One participant expressed disappointment with not being able to state her own spiritual beliefs in HI and shared “as an agency employee, I have to be very careful about that, but I find creative ways to word things.”

The power of HI was also discussed and participants agreed that HI is a powerful tool that needs to be wielded with values in mind; yet it was not clear from the discussion whose values should guide HI.

A third and prevalent frustration stemmed from the agency’s lack of support for HI. This manifested itself through insufficient funding for HI, i.e., staff resources and budget, expressed by one participant as “challenges of tiny budgets and sometimes no budget” and by another participant as there is “too much on my plate to be able to focus in this area as one ideally would want to.” The shortage of support was also evident in a lack of understanding on the part of the agency of the value of the communication provided by interpreters. One of the participants summed up the group discussion by saying “a lot of it came down to how organizations often fail to really understand effective communication and education.” Supervisors who were not supportive of new approaches, risk taking or reaching people at an emotional level were a source of frustration for participants. Paperwork was also a source of annoyance “but me, I find I get bogged down with the administration, the supervision, budgeting. I'm getting bored just talking about it myself.” Interpreters felt that they had more to offer their organizations and indicated that their communication skills could be put to better use within their agencies, particularly to help inspire other staff. This last subject was referenced at least 35 times, indicating the desire to be helpful to the agency and their colleagues was an important topic to the participants.
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Lastly, the agency’s need for increasing numbers of participants and measurement was felt to be the antithesis of inspiration. One participant expressed her annoyance by saying “my agency needs to get attendance and volunteer numbers up” and acknowledged that therefore staff resources were devoted to meeting these goals, rather than providing support to the interpretive function. Irritation with the agency’s need for measurement also exhibited itself in comments such as “the frustration that I experience is when we have to report, there’s the bean counters, the number crunchers, they don't necessarily get the fact that a lot of what we do is inspiration” and “it is very hard to measure inspiration and for many of us that's the most important part and that's where we lack the tools to measure.” This particular frustration with the agency led to an in-depth discussion on the agency’s need for measurement, which is covered next in this emergent theme section. Overall, agency accountability was obviously a source of aggravation for participants and venting these frustrations with fellow professionals in a non-threatening VWC environment was likely cathartic.
Table 7 Agency-related sources of frustration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency-related sources of frustration</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Agency goals (or lack of)</td>
<td>• Lack of clear goals</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Changing goals, i.e., new agency direction</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Agency values (or lack of)</td>
<td>• Interpretation is values-based</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Whose values guide interpretation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Agency lack of support for interpretation</td>
<td>• Lack of tangible support for interpretation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Too much emphasis on paperwork</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Lack of understanding of the value</td>
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<td>interpreters could provide to whole</td>
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<td></td>
<td>organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Agency emphasis on measurement</td>
<td>• Too much emphasis on increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>attendance and revenue</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Too much emphasis on required measures of success</td>
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**Measuring inspiration.**

“And, like the person who cuts grass, can say that the grass is cut or not; we have got to quantify [interpretation] in a way that lets us measure it and show someone else, here is what we have done.”

Agencies require measures of success in HI. These measures are typically quantitative, and include, for example, user statistics and revenue generated. Participating interpreters indicated that it is often difficult to report on successes within the interpretive program:

How do we measure the value of that child whose eyes light up, how do we bring that to the bargaining table when it's time to allocate budget and everybody else is talking widgets and we’re talking about changing lives?

One exasperated participant described that “managers give you that look” when you try to explain the value of subjective measures and that HI benefits are often intangible. The topics of measurement in HI and measurement of inspiration in HI were very important to the
participants and resulted in a total of 106 coded references. This was the most common topic of discussion, reflected in all three phases of the research and represented in each of the data sources, i.e., transcripts, participant notes, and graphic recordings.

Participants noted that it was difficult to reflect measures of success in HI in general, and even more difficult to reflect measures of success of inspiration in HI. Participants seemed to be in agreement that measuring inspiration in HI was problematic since it didn’t meet the agency’s need for quantitative measures “because a lot of the inspiration isn't something that you can put on a number scale” and “it's really challenging to justify the work that we do, that inspiration doesn't translate to numbers and reports, but it is often more important that our visitors walk away inspired than that we come up with an increase number of them. So, that's kind of the conundrum there.”

Two participants supported each other’s comments on the idea that perhaps the numbers were not as important as the resulting inspiration, stating:

- Is it better to have 5,000 kids come through your site and have a mediocre program or a program that you know maybe informs them but doesn't inspire them or is it better to have 50 kids stay there for a week and walk away transformed and ready to be that next generation of stewards?
- I think maybe an argument could even be made that it could be better to just have 5 kids and really make that solid connection with that even smaller group.
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There was lively discussion on how to deal with the issue of measuring inspiration and a difference of opinions was apparent. On the normative side, one interpreter indicated that she felt we should not even try to measure inspiration, sharing that:

This idea of measuring inspiration, it worries me a little bit because if you think about things that are truly inspirational, like sunsets or symphonies or heroic acts, those things can't be measured and in a lot of ways that’s what makes them inspirational because it makes you break-out of that analytical part of yourself and experience something in a different way. I think the need to measure sometimes kills inspiration, I don't enjoy the sunset more by knowing what percentage is pink and what percentage is purple.

Other participants took a more pragmatic perspective and in their own words, focused on the notion that inspiration was too intangible to measure:

- We were basically saying, you know, that inspiration; it can't really be a goal of the interpreter or an interpretive program because it’s not measurable.
- Unfortunately, inspiration is not something that you can necessarily measure; it doesn't necessarily look good on a spreadsheet or in a report.”
- I think it's a fool’s errand to think that we could say ‘I can quantify how many people were inspired by my programs’.

Some participants were willing to discuss how inspiration might be measured, and the discussion in one group revolved around knowing “what are the outcomes of an inspired visitor, that would be worthwhile.” It was acknowledged that measuring inspiration would not be an easy task, for example:

...
How do we take those bright eyes, those inspirational looks and how do we measure that, because that's absolutely essential for making sure that we have support for our programs, that we’re showing that our programs actually make a difference.

One participant raised the question:

What actual activities that we can measure would be indicators of inspiration because, while it’s okay to have a really great experience and feel your heart just spring out of your chest at these things, unless they actually manifest in some sort of activity or action by the participant and more than likely that's all it's going to be as inspirational, it's not going to necessarily take them farther down the road, so what we're asking is not just to inspire but to inspire to do something very specific and that's the thing that would be measurable.

An idea presented by one person for measuring inspiration stressed measuring the results of inspiration since they would be tangible and therefore measurable:

Doesn't cost a lot of money to measure what we're doing so we can turn back to the management or whoever's controlling the budget and say, this is what our programs do. This is the on-the-ground impact of what we're doing and so what we can measure are the antecedents to something like inspiration. We can say that when someone cares about the environment they do this and this and this, but this behavior, that's an antecedent of having an inspirational program. I think that we have to strive for inspiration but we have to think about how we can defend what we're doing cause we all know that it's spiritual in many ways what we’re trying to do and you can't measure that, you can't defend that.
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The same participant stated:

I feel very passionately that a lot of what we do cannot be quantified; [yet] we have got to figure out a way to quantify inspiration or provocation or education or whatever the goal is, in a way that lets us really measure it and show to someone else, here's what we have done.

She also felt strongly that since inspiration is up to the individual, it was unreasonable to hold the HI program accountable:

We have to be able to say what our goals are and be able to measure them; I am worried that inspiration is something that the person owns. I can lead you to the edge of the cliff; but I can’t remove the shade from your eyes; but good gosh; I don’t think we want to be measured if we don’t. We have to have a way of evaluating what we do.

This particular participant pointed out that if you must have measures in HI to fulfill agency obligations that you could focus the measures on the antecedents of inspiration, i.e., ask what actions people would take if they were inspired and then seek to determine if they do take those actions.

Another participant referred to the challenge of measuring impacts that may not exhibit until a later time “you know inspiration and how you measure it, is always very challenging because we're lifelong learners. It's an accumulation and sometimes people aren’t inspired until way later.” And the point was made by another participant that since inspiration is so personal we may never know if someone was inspired, for example “I mean, how would you find out whether someone was inspired unless they chose to share that with you?”
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Qualitative measures of inspiration were discussed. One means of measuring inspiration that was mentioned by six participants centred on the idea that people’s eyes light up when they are inspired. “The presence of shining eyes may be an indication that someone has been inspired” and “it wasn’t just fun and learning about nature after that, we all kind of had stars in our eyes for a minute.” Shining eyes are an indication that possibilities are being awakened, according to conductor Benjamin Zander (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZS-YYhoyBMo).

Other ideas for qualitative ways to measure inspiration, described by the participants, included:

- using anecdotal evidence recorded and shared by the interpreters;
- asking visitors for comments;
- observing or measuring what people are doing after;
- keeping in touch with people to hear how they changed or were inspired;
- planning for evaluations;
- providing evaluations that include questions with quantitative responses as well as room for open-ended comments;
- measuring increased participation in interpretive programs since people who are transformed will come back and tell others; and
- measuring repeat visitation.

One participant commented on the idea of asking participants for open-ended feedback “I think it is measurable. It's just not measurable in a way that formal bureaucratic agencies like to measure.” Another participant was pleased with the revelations on evaluation that she made as a result of the discussion:
That’s what I think I would do differently now is look at how I evaluate the visitor experience so that I can measure some sort of inspiration if there was any that was a result of anything that they experienced in the museum. Were they inspired? I’m really curious now; we didn’t look at that before.

Clearly, the topic of measurement was important to the participants, with differing opinions on how interpretation and inspiration could be measured, or even if they could or should be measured. Some of the research participants were more willing to challenge the status quo regarding the agency’s need for measurement and exhibited a desire for a different approach, while others seemed resigned to fulfilling this obligation, as required through the behavioural education–based approach to HI. As long as positivist reductionist underpinnings guide agencies, quantitative measures will be required. Overall, measurement is an area for further reflection within agencies, HI and within inspiration research; although, it cannot be addressed without considering the overall philosophical approach upon which HI is based.

**Provocation.**

“All you can really do is provoke and to me the subtle distinction there was that provocation is more an action of the interpreter.”

One topic that emerged through the dialogue was the relationship of provocation to inspiration in HI. As previously described, one interpreter raised the point that her site focused more on provocation than inspiration. This then led to a dialogue on the idea that inspiration is out of the control of an interpreter since it is personal and on the side of the visitor:
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I think that provocation is what we can have as a goal. But the inspiration is up to the member of the audience, that they're the ones that control that, I can provoke you but whether or not you are actually inspired by that, it's solely up to you.

As one of the group members summed up their discussion for the plenary group, she indicated:

We were talking about how provocation is really more our goal rather than inspiration cause inspiration sort of carries this positive connotation and sometimes the subject matter is not entirely positive, whether it be climate change or the civil right issues, and that inspiration meant a kind of transformative experience or transformation... but the discussion was that perhaps provocation could also be transformative.

The participant who raised the question regarding whether provocation or inspiration was the goal, was unsure as she recounted the group’s discussion:

…whether or not inspiration happens, like in the audience member themselves or the visitors themselves, we can aspire to it but we can’t make it happen. Where provocation seems like an action on the part of the interpreter, and I think there is a receiving side of it too, we can try to provoke an audience member but you know it still takes two to tango. But maybe in inspiration, more of it is on the visitor and a little bit of it is on the interpreter and with provocation more of it’s on the interpreter and a little bit on the visitor, I don't-- I don't know.

Although the topic of provocation was only discussed by one group of three participants and it was only referenced 23 times in the coding, it is a concept worth exploring in more detail
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since the term provocation is used in HI, as described in the review of the literature. Perhaps provocation and inspiration are considered interchangeable concepts to some within the HI profession, although the participants who discussed this subject seemed to feel that they were different concepts. The term provocation seems to have entered the HI field as one of Tilden’s principles, first described in 1957. Perhaps the term provocation was perceived more positively at that time, while in today’s world it seems to carry a negative connotation. I propose that the term inspiration may be a more suitable one that is reflective of today’s context; however, it is interesting to note that to provoke and to inspire are both verbs suggesting action on the part of the interpreter to encourage a visitor to do something and may not be reflective of what the visitor desires. I believe that more research into the differences in these terms within the HI context would be helpful to the field and think that an exploration into what the visitors want is also necessary. For example, is the interpretation being provided by interpreters actually inspiring to the visitors? In what ways is it inspiring and to what end does it inspire or provoke visitors?

Role of inspiration within HI.

“Inspiration is most definitely part of our interpretative goals for our programming.”

In this last section I addressed the overall role of inspiration in HI. When asked to consider the question “what might your work in interpretation look like if inspiration was your goal” some participants expressed confusion with the question, indicating that inspiration is the goal of interpretation (54 references). However, the role that inspiration plays officially within the various participating agencies is unknown; only three participants specifically noted that
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inspiration was a stated goal of their organization. For example “I work for an organization whose mission statement for now, at least, is to inspire leadership and excellence” for HI professionals, and another participant noted “I'm in a position now where inspiration is one of the stated goals of why the site exists.” One participant clarified that their work in HI fit within the required agency direction, and then focused on inspiring visitors “usually the programs you are creating and delivering have some sort of relationship to agency goals, mission, etc. and then within our programs we always look to ‘inspire’.” Another participant commented on inspiration being part of their agency’s needs “one of the needs of our agency is to inspire, sometimes our other needs and inspiration can be conflicting, and you have to just choose one of those, whatever is the most needed thing at the moment.” And finally, one participant alluded to inspiration being an important part of her work but opined “how do you do inspiration on the cheap? It's a balancing act.” If inspiration really is the goal of HI at the various agencies, perhaps it should be more clearly stated and communicated to all; only three of 33 participants referred to inspiration as being a stated goal of their agency or of the HI program at their agency.

When asked specifically what it would take to move them closer to offering inspiration-based HI, the participants generated ideas that fit into three different themes that are shown in Table 8, with a selection of participant quotes. For a more detailed table, see Appendix J.
### Required actions to move closer to inspiration-based HI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Actions</th>
<th>Sample of Relevant Participant Quotes</th>
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| **1. Agency-related:**  
A.) More agency support, in the form of resources, such as staff, time and money, as well as support in the form of allowing risk taking and being values driven.  
B.) Less agency concern with time consuming administrative tasks, including interpreters having to constantly justify interpretation. | “If you don't have the money, if you don't have the management support and if you're constantly having to justify things, it's hard to focus on interpretation, so obviously resources of any sort, whether it be training or money or more staff, would help us move closer to inspiration-based interpretation.”  
“In order for inspiration to happen, it would be nice to be able to surround around ourselves with inspiration and sometimes that's difficult in positions where you might be isolated in a park or in an agency, where there's not a lot of other people doing the same thing and ah, so having agency valuing what we do and having knowledge of what we do and how it works is really valuable to be able to work towards inspiration.” |
| **2. Interpreters being inspired and sharing their passion:**  
A.) with visitors, through visitor-oriented approaches, i.e., dialogic approaches, taking the interpretation to them, and co-creating.  
B.) with other staff, through shared learning, being supportive, and having a shared purpose. | “As an interpreter we talk about having that passion inside us and how that helps us help people connect to whatever it is that we're interpreting and I think that interpretation is related to the passion in interpreters.”  
“I think there's something to be said for stepping back at some point once you’ve helped people make that connection. You don't have to be the centre of the stage, but I certainly feel that the excitement and the passion have a role to play.”  
“There's always a bit of the interpreter inside of me that's ON and is trying to inspire in some way whether it’s to inspire a change in our organization whether it is to inspire a visitor to see something different about our world and space or whether it's to inspire another organization to work with ours towards our common goals.”  
“Sharing the positive side of things more than just the negative side.” |
| **3. Being aware of inspiration and willing to consider it in interpretation, including considering the spiritual and emotional sides.** | “I don’t think in every stop on every walk I’m gonna try for the inspiration card but when I do play it I want to be very careful with what I'm doing.”  
“Recognizing inspiration when it's happening and allowing it to be.” |
“Feeling connected to other people, connected to myself, connected to the world around me, part of something bigger, that is one larger whole and for me that is a very spiritual concept.”
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As shown in Table 8, having more agency support, building on the passion of the interpreters, and being aware of inspiration, are three means of moving closer to inspiration-based HI. The lack of support from their agencies was a source of frustration to participating interpreters and was seen as a major impediment to inspiration. Interpreters believe they have much more to offer their agencies and supporting an agency-wide focus on inspiration may be a way they could increase their contribution. Interpreters sharing their passion with both visitors and other staff is another way to move closer to inspiration-based HI, with the caveat noted by the participants that the interpreter should not be overwhelming. And finally, just being mindful of inspiration as a concept in HI is an important consideration for inspiration-based HI. As one long-time interpreter opined, inspiration did not seem to receive as much respect in HI as it did in the past and a return to the basics was needed.

Next steps

In the final harvest at all VWC sessions I asked the participants how they could act on the suggestions that resulted from the discussions and what they would like to see as a result of the research. Comments, in participant’s own words, included:

- We’re touching on the unspoken parts of our field.
- I will think about inspiration more.
- It’s an interesting idea for using in interpretation.
- What I think I would do differently now is look at how I evaluate the visitor experience so that I can measure some sort of inspiration if there was any that was a result of anything that they experienced in the museum. Were they inspired?
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- What’s really valuable coming out of this experience is awareness of some other tools that may already be out there.
- I’ve liked the conversation; it’s been fun.
- The facilitated dialogue, to look at techniques that might work well would be really helpful, I think.
- I think this is important for interpretation and the field especially at this point when, I think the idea of the benefits of interpretation or why we do it are becoming less known.

Some participants expressed interest in keeping the conversation going, for example “having been part of this conversation now I wanna continue the conversation with these people and whoever those other people are.” Different online venues for continuing the conversation were mentioned and included Skype, Google Hangout, LinkedIn and Facebook, with Facebook being the most commonly mentioned option, despite LinkedIn being used in the study and aimed at professional interactions such as within HI. One participant noted that it would be best if the conversation continued through an existing interpretation venue “just get them linking together and talking because that will bring in a broader audience, it also helps eliminate extra places that you have to go to talk about these things when people are already busy.” The importance of conferences within the profession was mentioned, including the idea that Canadian and American interpreters could learn from each other and that cross border networking would be beneficial. Blogs were also mentioned as a potential means of sharing. Continuing the community of practice that I initiated through this research inquiry would be a means of prolonging the project as an action research initiative.
As previously mentioned, this project marked the first known use of virtual WC for a dissertation and I assessed the use of the method as part of my research. In the following chapter I considered the method from the perspective of the seven WC guiding principles, discussed overall considerations and provided recommendations. Participant feedback on the VWC process was received from eight of the 33 participants, and I have incorporated their notes into the chapter. Figure 9, on page 157 at the end of this section, is a mind map of the VWC context based on the WC principles.

**Results based on WC Principles**

**Setting the context.** I believe that I addressed the purpose, participants and parameters as outlined in Brown and Isaacs (2005) through actions taken prior to each VWC, as well as at the beginning of each session. Prior to the VWC, I undertook the following:

- invited professional interpreters to be involved in the study through the professional interpretation organizations in North America;
- outlined the project and expected participation on my website;
- sent interested participants an invitation letter with details on the study;
- established rapport with each participant via emails;
- sent participants information on the study, including handouts on the WC as a process and detailed information on how to sign into MaestroConference;
- prepared and sent out a menu of questions; and
- engaged participants in dialogue during test pilot sessions.
At the start of each session I set the context through:

- reviewing the study, including the contents of the informed consent letter;
- using a PowerPoint presentation to highlight the questions and WC;
- providing a review of the technological aspects prior to starting the dialogue.

Setting the context in the spring was also achieved through the use of a Doodle poll as a means of scheduling the VWC for a date and time that worked for the majority of the participants. As described in Chapter Three, the use of Doodle poll to choose dates to ensure maximum participation was not successful; I preselected the date for the fall VWC without using a Doodle poll and ended up with more participants than in the spring VWC as this information enabled people to determine their availability before volunteering. In the fall participants were only asked to donate a short amount of time, while those recruited in the spring were asked to give more time, i.e., all three phases. The shorter time commitment required in the fall may have increased the number of participants for that time. To save planning and preparation time in the future and perhaps increase the number of participants, I advise selecting the dates for the VWCs before promoting the project to potential research participants and limiting the expected hours of involvement.

Overall, I tried to ensure participants fully understood the research project and feel that I may have overwhelmed them with too many emails and updates. The fact that only four interpreters were involved in all three phases is one piece of evidence that I believe shows that the participants suffered from fatigue. In the future, I would send out less information and ask the participants for less time commitment.
Creating hospitable space. Creating hospitable space is difficult to do in the online venue and I am not sure if I was able to create an environment that nurtured authentic conversations; however, I attempted to create hospitable space through the following means:

- using a PowerPoint presentation throughout the session, the slides included the questions and WC graphics presented in a welcoming format;
- using a menu for the questions (rather than a standard agenda), in keeping with the cafe theme;
- inviting participants to submit a photo of themselves (two declined in the spring and four declined in the fall), which I used to create a collage image of us all sitting at tables in a café, the image was shared with the group as part of the PowerPoint presentation in the spring, although it was only available for a few minutes and thus did not provide a visual cue throughout the VWC;
- sending participants a thank you note with a coffee shop gift certificate prior to the VWC and encouraging them to have their favourite non alcoholic beverage available during the cafe;
- reviewing the online interface and ensuring participants knew how to raise their hand to have their microphone activated and how to ask for technical support;
- inviting participants to introduce themselves at the beginning of the VWC and say their name each time they spoke while in the break-out groups;
- referring to being together in a cafe a few times throughout the session, in an effort to help people imagine that we were together in a cafe setting; and
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- turning on my webcam so that people could see my face live as I welcomed them to the cafe.

In the online venue chosen, i.e., MaestroConference, participants were not able to see each other and visual cues were nonexistent. One participant commented on the lack of body language “there was one person in one table group whose tone may have indicated that she was not happy but it was difficult to determine if this was the case without knowing her normal tone or seeing her physically.” I had hoped to use the social webinar function offered by MaestroConference, in which participants are able to see photographs of the other participants in their break-out group; however, this service was still in beta testing and was not available for use. (Note- as of December 2014 the social webinar function is now available.) An ideal means of creating hospitable space in a VWC would entail using a teleconference program in which participants would be able to see each other live, at least while in break-out groups, as this would allow for verbal cues that help foster smooth communication. According to one participant an option would entail “having video, or icons or avatars to represent each person, [this] may help to provide a more comfortable space.” The teleconference option, with rotating and recordable breakout groups, was not possible at the time.

As the facilitator, I was pleased to hear one participant say “overall, the sessions felt hospitable.” I think the participants created the hospitable space by being supportive of each other; I coded 107 encouraging comments, i.e., in which participants acknowledged the answers or ideas shared by other participants.
Exploring questions that matter. Questions are critical to the success of a VWC and particularly so in the case of a research project. As the researcher I chose the VWC questions based on my overall research questions and the review of the literature. Due to time constraints and a focus on mastering the technology, I did not pre-test my questions through colleagues, although I did pre-test them with the ethics board and two of my committee members. I believe that pre-testing the questions with actual participants and modifying accordingly would have made for more useful and directed discussion. I found that for some participants the answers to the questions seemed too obvious to them and thus they discounted the questions, resulting in what I considered to be shallow answers. This might have been addressed through a more comprehensive harvest round, in which I asked follow-up questions when table hosts presented the results of their conversations.

The questions were presented to participants ahead of the VWC through an email copy of the menu and posted on the computer screen for easy referral during dialogue. I intended to start the dialogue with a general question about the qualities that make for a good conversation, as advised in the literature (Jorgenson & Steier, 2013); however, instead I started with an icebreaker question aimed at getting participants to share where they were located geographically and a personal story related to inspiration. My assumption was that as interpreters the participants already had a good understanding of what qualities make for good conversation. The intent of sharing a personal story was to encourage reflection and open the door to further sharing (Jorgenson & Steier, 2013). It was interesting to note that most participants said where they worked and not just where they were located geographically. I specifically asked only for
geographic location so that people could keep their work locations anonymous if they chose; however, it seemed that participants were pleased to share with the group where they worked and this helped to build camaraderie with the other participants, who in most cases were strangers. I think the icebreaker questions were a success at setting the context, creating hospitable space and starting the dialogue with an easy question. One participant expressed how he was surprised to be sharing personal stories of inspiration “it’s interesting, this question sort of turns it back around on us. I mean normally interpreters are the ones trying to, to do the inspiring.” Sharing workplaces and personal stories may have been important components of the VWC to those interpreters interested in networking.

One issue with the questions was raised by a participant in post session feedback. In the fall, apparently one of the groups did not understand the question and they therefore struggled to answer it. In the online forum they did not have a chance to ask the facilitator to clarify, an action that would be relatively easy to address in a face to face setting. This speaks to the need for participants to know how to raise their hand or use the chat box to ask the facilitator a question even while they are in a break-out group, and to providing participants with information at the beginning to inform them that this action would be acceptable and even encouraged. As using technology for online conversations becomes more mainstream, perhaps these actions will be better known to participants.

I ended up asking different questions in each of the rounds and this was a difficult decision for me, as I felt there would be merit to asking the same question over with different configurations of break-out group participants. I was not able to find guidance in the literature
and believe that this provides a topic for future study, i.e., what generates more useful results in a study into a topic, e.g., asking different questions in each round of break-out groups, or asking the same question throughout the different break-out groups? The Delphi method may be worth investigating as a means to address this question; this technique excels at collecting the opinions of experts, using different questions in each round, while giving participants the opportunity to verify the responses from the previous round (Skulmoski, Hartman, & Krahn, 2007). It would be interesting to redo my VWC sessions with repetition of questions to see if this resulted in more in-depth dialogue on the topic of inspiration in HI. Another topic for future research would involve investigating how to achieve a balance between addressing the prearranged research-based questions that are designed to meet the researcher’s needs and the emerging questions of value to the participants.

**Encouraging everyone’s contribution.** Encouraging full participation in the VWC was initially achieved through inviting everyone to introduce themselves, indicate where they were located geographically and share a brief story at the beginning of the VWC. The introductory plenary session was followed by three rounds of break-out table groups, in which participants were in groups of no more than four at a time. Placing people in groups is very quick through MaestroConference and it is easy for participants to be involved while in the break-out groups, i.e., they did not have to press a button to raise their hand as all microphones were active. They were encouraged to state their name before talking as a means of helping the others identify the speaker. The groups were set up for random distribution, although two of the eight participants who provided feedback on the process commented that they always seemed to be with the same
people, and that there were not enough participants in general. In feedback received after the fall session one participant noted “the Cafe provided good opportunities for conversations, but I felt that more participants were needed at the tables” and another opined that “only two participants at a table made for not a lot of dialogue.” In that group, apparently the other two participants took a bio break at the same time, leaving a group of only two. Larger group sizes overall would allow for more break-out groups and better odds of being placed with different people each time and I recommend that future researchers using this method seek to increase the number of participants above the 13 and 20 that I had in my two VWC sessions. Increased promotions and a decrease in expected hours of contribution may increase participation in a future study.

Participants were invited to be as involved as they would like and as expected, some participants spoke more than others. An assessment of the spring dialogue revealed that the most talkative participants were the three table hosts, with approximately 70 references coded to each of them, and 12 references coded to the quietest participant. In the future, training for the table hosts should stress that their job is to encourage input from all and not run the show. I think it is important to accept that in a VWC some people will speak more than others, although the hope is that breaking into small groups will increase the input from the quieter participants. Inviting all participants to individually contribute to the final harvest, rather than just receiving report outs by the table host, may help contribute to involvement by all.

Participants were encouraged to keep their own notes or doodles throughout the VWC, similar to participants having paper and markers on the table in a face to face WC. I encouraged people to send me their notes after and in the end, received one doodle and three sets of notes
from the spring participants, and 11 sets of notes from the fall participants. As described earlier I received more in the fall due to my pleas for notes in lieu of break-out group recordings. Encouraging people to doodle or take notes while they are involved in the VWC may foster creativity and helps the VWC mirror its face to face counterpart; however, I am not sure it is necessary for the researcher to receive these after, unless they serve a particular purpose, e.g., the researcher plans to compare the notes with the audio recordings or to replace missed audio recordings. A quick assessment of the notes received indicated that they seemed mainly like notes taken in school and therefore closely mirrored the discussions. An option for encouraging note taking and allowing for immediate sharing with the rest of the group involves inviting all participants to contribute to a shared online document through Google doc (www.docs.google.com).

**Cross-pollinating and connecting diverse perspectives.** Cross pollinating and connecting diverse perspectives were achieved through four means:

- rotating break-out groups, with random participant selection each time;
- having mini-harvests, i.e., sharing by each group at a plenary session after each break-out group;
- being invited to share ideas from the last group at the start of each new group; and
- undertaking a final harvest.

Having now experimented with using these means of connecting different perspectives, I feel that sharing at the beginning of each new group is not necessary if mini-harvests are used, since the mini-harvests provide all participants with summaries of the previous group’s
discussion. In the spring VWC I had not planned for mini-harvests, but had asked the table hosts to seek participant feedback from their last round at the start of the new round. The MaestroConference technical support person encouraged the mini-harvests and the table hosts continued to do what they had been asked, resulting in duplication of sharing and lost time that could have been devoted to the next question. Cross pollinating was also hampered somewhat by the small participant numbers and would likely be improved through increased number of participants.

The table hosts played a key role in the cross pollination stage. Prior to the spring VWC I invited three participants to act as table hosts and their only training was a brief “cheat sheet” outlining their responsibilities. They welcomed participants to the table group, read the questions, kept the discussion flowing and shared the group’s discussion with the whole group at the mini-harvests. As mentioned above they also invited people to share ideas from their last table group discussion prior to initiating the discussion on the next question. At times the table hosts asked their own questions of the group, resulting in a side topic discussion that was not as relevant to the research questions. The table hosts in the spring did keep the discussion moving and ensured participation by all; however, they did seem to do most of the talking and I opted to test another approach to table hosts in the fall. For the September VWC I did not set up table hosts ahead of time but encouraged them to emerge organically as a means of testing this approach. Due to the lack of recordings of the break-out groups in the fall, I did not get to listen to the audio of the groups, so am not sure how the table hosts emerged and how successful they were. I invited table hosts to send me their notes and after the spring session I received notes
from two out of the three hosts and after the fall VWC I received notes from six of the 12 table hosts, indicating that the fall hosts were slightly less committed to their hosting role. After the fall session one participant commented that “the lack of a designated Table Host who had a clear idea of purpose, goals and concepts sometimes led to not everyone being able to contribute properly, and some missed connections.” I recommend using assigned table hosts in research-based VWCs as they will ensure that the research questions are addressed. I highly recommend providing the hosts with training in WC facilitation, i.e., to ensure that they are in tune with the method and to encourage them to invite participation in the table groups, without being overwhelming or making any participants feel centred out.

An assessment of the flow of conversation indicated that one of the emergent themes, i.e., those that were different from the themes identified in the inspiration literature, e.g., measurement, resulted from table group dialogue in which one person presented an idea, which was then further discussed by the group, and shared with the plenary and then continued into the next break-out group. This process seemed to reveal the “magic in the middle” that is sought after by WC practitioners. As another example, in one mini-harvest in the fall session the following flow of ideas was apparent and the evolving dialogue involved four different participants as shown by the different colours for each participant in Figure 8.
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Figure 8 Flow of ideas in a VWC mini-harvest

Note- each different colour represents a different person

Group report out: how do we measure inspiration?
Through staying in touch with visitors after.
What activities can we measure that would be indicators of inspiration?
It can’t really be measured, except maybe through qualitative visitor feedback.
Challenge to measure since inspiration may not manifest until the future.
We need to focus on engaging people so they will make future changes.
It’s all about the fundamentals of interpretation.
There are different ways to measure success, i.e., a range.
Listening together. The principle of listening together was addressed through the mini-
harvests, as well as the final harvest, in which groups shared the highlights of their dialogue,
while others listened and provided comments after. I encouraged participants to listen together at
a few junctures in the VWC; however, I feel that time devoted to introducing people to the
principles of WC would be time well spent at the beginning of the session to ensure that
participants know the value of listening. I was pleased to hear the table groups say “here is what
our last table group came up with” instead of “here is what I think.” This suggested to me that
they were listening to each other and wanted to report on the group discussion and not just
provide their own thoughts.

One participant noted how pleased she was to have voice contact through the VWC:

It is always interesting to me to hear how similar we all are in what we try to share and
educate, no matter the setting. The passion comes through, and that was made possible by
having ‘voice to voice’ contact with others. It is a much MUCH better way to remotely
conference than text alone, because you cannot hear nuances or meaning in typed words.

This speaks to the benefit of the VWC with its synchronous dialogue over other online
conference techniques being used today, in which participants do not get to speak to each other
but may respond to each other via typed communication. I did provide participants with the
option of using the chat function in the VWC sessions; however, I did not encourage it as it
seemed like it would distract participants from the conversation. As well, from a facilitator’s
perspective, it was difficult to monitor the chat and keep everything else running smoothly. In
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The facilitator’s role in listening to the break-out groups is an important one. While it is impossible to listen to all the groups, the facilitator can and should listen in on each for a few minutes in order to get a feel for the dialogue and to take notes in the event of a lost recording. The facilitator may be also able to answer a question for the group to help keep the discussion moving. However, a major limitation with recording the break-out groups is that through MaestroConference, the break-out group recording times must be set ahead of the session and this means that there was no flexibility to allow any table group discussions to go longer than scheduled. For some participants the length of the break-out groups was problematic and they wanted more time, while others seemed to be finished discussing the question sooner, leaving the group members with awkward silence. In the words of one participant “I took leadership in facilitating a session and things went well at first but I could not think of questions to keep the discussion rolling so we had a period of silence at the end.” A suggestion posed by one participant for avoiding awkward silences was “to provide more guidance to participants in advance by suggesting that they prepare possible related questions and ideas to discuss.” A table host may also be able to keep the discussion flowing; however, it is important to acknowledge that silence is an ideal opportunity for reflection and that after the silence is over the group may exhibit new insights (J. Brown & Isaacs, 2005). The issue of awkward silence may exhibit in face to face WC as well as VWC.
**Harvesting collective discoveries.** In the final harvest, table groups provided their summaries one at a time, and the report outs were succinct and seemed to accurately capture the dialogue. I then asked the final menu questions of the whole group. These questions aimed to bring all the dialogue together as a wrap up and also to invite the group to give consideration to future use of the ideas. Participants seemed reticent to provide comments on the final questions in the harvests at both the spring and fall VWC and I feel that this was a result of my inexperience as a WC host. As the overall host, I believe I could have done a better job of listening for patterns throughout and sharing these at the final harvest. This may have prompted more dialogue in the final harvest. I do not feel that as a neophyte WC host I did the final harvest session justice and recommend that an experienced facilitator should take the lead for the VWC overall, including the final harvest. The time spent in the final harvest seemed too short; yet this part of the VWC could be rich and revealing, and I recommend allowing more time for this crucial step in the process. It is also important in the harvest to build on the ideas across the whole group, regardless of tables, rather than limiting the harvest conversation to the table hosts (N. Agger-Gupta, personal communication, January 17, 2015). In a face to face WC the energy in the room is usually palpable in the final harvest; however, this energy is not visible in VWC and it is difficult to know how members of the group are feeling. Having emoticons people can select to show how they are feeling at this stage may be a means of gauging emotions and lightening the mood. The harvest sessions were concluded with next steps, inviting participants to share how they would use the results of the dialogue and what they would like to see as a result of the research.

however, none of the participants commented on the graphic recordings. As a researcher, I posted them on my wall in my workspace and they acted as an ongoing reminder of the interesting dialogue and the research project.

For future consideration of the use of graphic recordings in a VWC, I recommend that the graphic recorder sign onto the online meeting room a minimum of one hour prior to the session in order to test the technology before the participants join in the session. The recorder also must have a computer program that will allow them to draw on a tablet and have it project onto their computer screen, which would then be shared live with the participants via a screen share mechanism. The recorder also needs to be shown how to move themselves between table groups so that they are able to change groups at a time that works for them, i.e., at a natural break, an option that was not available during my VWC sessions. I discovered that online graphic recording is very much a speciality within the limited pool of skilled graphic recorders, and was in contact with 12 graphic recorders before finding one who was able to do online images and was available for my sessions. It is an expensive component of the research and the value it brings to the overall research project needs to be considered, including how the visualizations are to be used by the researcher and participants in the research inquiry. Viewing the graphic recordings take shape may be a distraction to the participants; although they are typically only visible during the final harvest, when people are encouraged to be reflective. It is also important to acknowledge that the recordings are a secondary data source as they are an interpretation of the dialogue by the recorder.
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Overall, the mini-harvests were very useful and productive, but the final plenary harvest sessions were weak; perhaps as most key points had already been covered in the mini-harvests. I do believe that the final harvest provided nourishment for future action and reflection and see the value in the harvests as offering a positive initial dialogue into the role that inspiration may play in interpretation of cultural and natural heritage.
**Overall assessment of VWC**

VWC is a worthwhile mechanism for undertaking research, although it is heavily dependent on technology, as well as participant and researcher time. In this section I addressed each of these issues in turn, and shared the feedback provided by the participants.

**Technology.** Technology is the limiting factor in the use of VWC as a research method. Ensuring the online interface was working for all seemed to overpower the dialogue at times; people had glitches with the interface or paused discussion to ask questions regarding the mechanics of MaestroConference. I coded 161 references to process-related dialogue in 22 of the 36 different data sources. The sound quality and the delay in using the online interface were an issue for at least one participant “I would best describe it as talking with someone overseas before modern technology; it reminds me of when we used to call Europe when I was a kid. The delay distracted from spontaneous conversation.” Listening to the audio recordings
after the sessions, it was apparent that the sound quality was better for those who were using a microphone and headset. For those participants who were not, it was sometimes possible to hear background noises, such as a door bell ringing, and this was likely a distraction to the participants during the session. I believe that the technology will only get better; people will become more comfortable with it; and that this technique holds much promise for the future.

The participants need to feel comfortable with the online meeting venue and I tried two different ways to achieve this. In the spring I suggested that participants join in a test/pilot session a week or so before the actual VWC. I ended up offering multiple test sessions and 20 people took advantage of this opportunity; however, not all 20 people participated in a VWC. In the end, 11 out of 18 spring participants had taken part in a test/pilot prior to their involvement in a VWC. I discovered that participating in a test/pilot did not preclude the participant from having trouble in the actual VWC as three of the four people who had trouble with the technology in the first VWC had participated in a test/pilot. In the fall I suggested that new participants join in the session 30 minutes early, and recommend this as a better option than having them participate in a test/pilot on an earlier day. Setting up times for various test/pilots to meet people’s schedules was a very time consuming process and took time away from other important research tasks.

In the spring I spent many hours becoming familiar with and testing the interface program, as initially I intended to conduct the technical aspects of the session myself. In the end I opted to pay for a technical support person from MaestroConference and this was well worth the money spent! I did discover that a little bit of knowledge was a curse as it prompted me to be
too hands-on with the technical aspects during the sessions and it would have been easier on the technical support person and less stressful for me if I had just trusted him to do his job.

Break-out group recordings are essential to the use of VWC for research purposes and they were a major limitation. As mentioned previously, in order to get recordings of the break-out groups through MaestroConference, the researcher has to request the recordings in advance and set the time for each one, which then turn on and off automatically. This means that there is no flexibility in the agenda to allow discussions to go longer or shorter. I felt that I was too ruled by the clock and this distracted from the organic flow of the session. I took pride in meeting all the timing restrictions; however, I believe that with flexibility in timing, the results may have been more rich and full. Also, if the recordings fail, as they did in my fall session, the researcher is left without digital audio records of the break-out group discussions. For me, missing approximately 240 minutes of break-out group dialogue was devastating.

**Participant time.** Finding participants who were willing to devote time and energy to the project was a limitation and a time consuming task. In the end I think I asked too much of participants and as a result had only 33 in total, with only four people participating in the whole project, 22 participating in two phases and seven participating in one phase only.

Once people were committed it was important to be respectful of their time and keep the sessions at the length promised to them. I settled for 150 minute sessions, and encouraged people to take bio breaks at any time; however, there was not enough time to devote to the questions and I believe that with more time we would have delved more deeply into the subject. I recommend spending more time in the VWC if the group members are willing; however, given that people
are busy and found it difficult to commit to 150 minutes, the likelihood of getting them to commit even longer is negligible. Twenty minutes per question in the break-out sessions seemed to be too short and one participant exhibited obvious frustration, with deep sighs, as the bell chimed to let them know their session was just about over. Other participants noted in the feedback the lack of time to address the questions, although one person indicated “I did find it difficult to set aside such large chunks of time during each day for these meetings, especially in a very busy time of year at work.” Sessions need to be planned to take place outside of the participant’s busy season(s) if possible. One solution for future consideration would be to offer more, but shorter, VWC sessions. The shorter sessions may be easier for participants to commit to and having more sessions, with each one building on the discussions from the last, similar to the Delphi method, would enable the conversations to deepen and develop in complexity.

**Researcher time.** I spent an incredible amount of time on the VWC process, and in retrospect, while much of the time commitment may have been due to the novelty of the process to me, my advice to others is to carefully consider the time commitment required before engaging in similar research. As noted earlier, some of the researcher’s time may be saved by not offering test/pilot sessions in the weeks prior to the VWC, not offering Doodle polls for choosing dates and times, not spending as much time getting familiar with the technical interface, and reducing the number of emails sent to each participant. Time spent finding a suitable online venue for the VWC and cultivating relationships with the participants was time well spent. Besides being aware of the amount of time the researcher must devote to the project, he/she needs to be cognizant of their roles. For example, I recommend that the researcher not be the...
VWC facilitator, as this adds an extra burden to the researcher, who should be free to listen into the discussions and maintain a high level overall perspective on the VWC, adding comments or questions as needed.

**Participant feedback.** In the final evaluations, many participants spoke in favour of the VWC process, indicating, in their own words:

- I think the World Cafe lends itself very well to this type of cross-country sharing of ideas.
- Overall, I think that the World Cafe format works well.
- I feel that I had conversations that mattered to me in that I:
  - was able to learn ideas for programs from colleagues;
  - satisfied a curiosity about what interpreters are doing in other locations;
  - was able to work through my own ideas by speaking them out loud to colleagues who would understand and be able to knowledgeably discuss them; and
  - felt that I was contributing to the research being done;
- It meets the seven guidelines well. I think we accomplished all of those things during our discussions.
- The café model is a nice one for many reasons.
- I feel that I could email any of the people in my groups now and ask a question without fearing that it will be misinterpreted.
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It was encouraging to read these favourable comments from the eight participants who provided their feedback on the process; however, we do not know what the other 25 participants thought of the process. I reminded participants of the need for feedback on the process a few times via email and recommend in the future that the researcher takes the time to follow up with each participant personally via email and/or phone to obtain their feedback on the process.

Contribution of VWC as Research Methodology

Research question four related to the new research method used in the study and asked “what could virtual WC contribute to research methodology?” The VWC offers much promise as a large group research method as it enables many participants from a wide geographic area to engage in dialogue at minimal cost. The technology is available; however, it is a limitation. Hopefully, the technology will continue to improve and future use of this research method will advance to video conferencing in which participants can be fully engaged while seeing each other live in their small break-out table groups. The VWC format was particularly useful for bringing the subjects of provocation, measurement and receptivity to inspiration to the forefront as interpreters openly discussed these important subjects and the “magic in the middle” was evident. Overall, my advice to researchers is to be prepared to devote time to using the process and the technology, time that will be worthwhile for bringing together people from across wide geographic areas for “conversations that matter.”

My recommendations for researchers considering using VWC as a research method are listed in Table 9.
Table 9 *Recommendations regarding use of VWC for research purposes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Devote time to development of questions.</td>
<td>Base VWC questions on your research questions. Pretest questions with your participants or a similar group. Use questions as base, but allow the dialogue to evolve. Decide whether to offer one main question or a few questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Gain experience leading World Café.</td>
<td>Researcher needs to be trained and experienced in leading WC in face to face format before attempting to offer it in the online milieu.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Ensure enough participants.</td>
<td>Promote to your participant group well in advance. Aim for a critical mass to ensure enough variety in break-out groups. Set date and time before promoting. Offer more, but shorter sessions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Set realistic expectations for participants.</td>
<td>Do not overwhelm them with too much information. Realize that to them your project is one of many things they have on the go. Invite them to join 30 minutes early to test the technology.</td>
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<td>5. Offer at least two sessions with the same participants.</td>
<td>The first session may be considered a warm up that gives everyone familiarity with the technology, the participants and the research topic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Use pre-assigned table hosts.</td>
<td>The hosts will play a key role in keeping the dialogue focused on your questions, yet allowing for the “magic in the middle.” Take the time to train them for their roles. Be prepared for some people to speak more than others and for the silences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Create hospitable space in the online venue.</td>
<td>Invite all participants to introduce themselves, indicate where they are geographically, and share a personal story of relevance to the topic at the beginning of the VWC. Use other techniques to make the online venue welcome and inviting</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Clarify the role of the researcher.</td>
<td>Who will be the facilitator? Acknowledge that the researcher’s main opportunity to ask probing questions is in the mini and final harvests. Discuss how to handle probing questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Investigate online providers.</td>
<td>Determine the provider who will best meet your needs. Ensure that they are able to offer break-out groups and provide digital recordings of all break-out sessions with ease of set up and flexibility. Investigate video conferencing options to provide face to face contact for participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Become familiar with computer interface.</td>
<td>Learn how the online service provider’s system works but hire their technical support staff to support your VWC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Consider use of graphic recordings.</td>
<td>What role will they play? Are these recordings necessary? What value will they add?</td>
</tr>
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Chapter Six: Recommendations and Conclusions

In this chapter I have returned to the remaining research questions and addressed each one in turn, followed by suggestions for future research and general recommendations.

Research Question 1

The first research questions were focused on participant beliefs about inspiration:

a) What does the concept of inspiration mean to North American heritage interpretive program managers, supervisors and front line interpreters?

b) What are some of the narratives of experiences of inspiration as told by North American interpretive program managers, supervisors and front line interpreters?

c) What do North American heritage interpretive program managers, supervisors and front line interpreters think the concept of inspiration could contribute to heritage interpretation?

The points raised by participants showed that they understood inspiration as a complex concept that was at the heart of HI. They described inspiration in its literal form, i.e., breathing in, and as a term that was intricate, multi-faceted, ambiguous, and as something that started with curiosity and ended with action. The participants’ understanding of inspiration as a concept generally fit with the findings of psychology researchers, with the addition of the HI setting as context.

Participant narratives revealed that they were inspired by people, including audiences and fellow interpreters; places, i.e., objects and happenings in the external environment, including the place they work and the phenomena associated with place; and participation, including actions
interpreters take, such as interpreting, learning, networking and so on. They were inspired to take actions themselves and encourage their visitors to take actions. The participants acknowledged that visitors were likely inspired by and inspired to the same things as the interpreters, with minor divergence due to their different roles. Overall, there seemed to be consensus that inspiration is the goal of HI and that cultivating receptivity to inspiration is part of the regular work of an interpreter.

Research Question 2

The second research question aimed to address “what would be the attributes of inspiration-based interpretation?” The attributes of inspiration-based HI incorporate the characteristics of inspiration as identified within the literature and verified through participant dialogue:

- Inspiration is two sided, i.e., inspired by and inspired to;
- Inspiration is transcendent;
- Inspiration is positive;
- Inspiration is individual;
- Inspiration is unexpected;
- Inspiration is holistic;
- Inspiration is transmissible;
- Inspiration requires receptivity; and
- Inspiration receptivity may be cultivated.
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It was my initial discovery of the two sides of inspiration, i.e., *inspired by* and *inspired to*, that inspired me to focus on exploring inspiration within HI. I was intrigued by this division and felt that it was an important consideration for my field. While I still believe this is the case, I have realized that if HI is to be visitor-oriented and holistic, the *inspired by* and *inspired to* elements need to be given careful consideration in planning and execution in HI. For example, an objective in HI that aims to inspire visitors to change their behaviour may inadvertently support the liberal and behaviourist education traditions, an action which may or may not be intended by the interpreter or desired by the participant. I am also mindful of the fact that the division of inspiration into *inspired by* and *inspired to* is a false one created by psychologists and such a division does not account for the wholeness and richness of the experience.

Research Question 3

The third sub questions addressed barriers and bridges to inspiration in HI “what are the barriers to implementing inspiration-based interpretation? What are the bridges to implementing inspiration-based interpretation?” Three barriers and three bridges are outlined below.

The first major barrier to focusing on inspiration in HI consisted of the *needs of the agency*, particularly the agency need for measurement. The agency’s need for measurement in HI was a source of frustration to participants and it was the most discussed subject throughout the research project. Participants varied in opinions regarding whether inspiration should or could be measured, and how to measure inspiration. Some participants felt that with the overall lack of agency support for HI it was even more important to provide the requested measurables in order
to be taken seriously at budget allocation time. The agency’s requirement for measures of success will need to be addressed in some way in inspiration-based HI.

*Status quo* interpretation, with its agency and cognitive foci, is a second barrier to inspiration-based HI. British economist John Maynard Keynes summed up the human tendency to avoid trying new things when he said “the difficulty lies, not in the new ideas, but in escaping from the old ones, which ramify, for those brought up as most of us have been, into every corner of our minds” (Keynes, 1935, Preface). As long as HI is seen as a communication process in which an expert interpreter shares the “right” messages on behalf of their agency, i.e., the Shannon and Weaver sender-receiver communication model, even with the feedback loop added to the traditional model, the communication is still an agency-based information initiative that fails to account for what the visitor brings to the exchange (Ablett & Dyer, 2009; Shalaginova, 2012). The communication exchange is skewed towards the agency’s view of place and the agency approved information on place, and this fails to account for other views of place. Perhaps exploring inspiration in HI will take hold as a new idea that may gain traction since it is also an old idea, having been referred to within HI literature and practice for the last 100 years.

The practitioners in the field, AKA the research participants, seemed less critical of the status quo in HI practice than the literature, suggesting a possible disconnect between theory and practice. Interpreters need to critically evaluate what they do and why, and consider that they act as agents for the agency. The participants noted many frustrations with their agencies and expressed their desire to see the agencies change; this will require interpreters being mindful of changes they need to make in practice as well. In retrospect, involving practitioners within the
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field of HI did not yield as much critical analysis as I anticipated; although I am mindful that interpreters may find it difficult to step away from the status quo as they are products of the literature and training that dominate the field.

A third barrier to implementing inspiration-based HI rests in the individuality of the visitor. Inspiration is not a “one size fits all” concept and inspiration-based HI must give consideration to how to meet the needs of the different audience members and acknowledge that the variety of participants have diverse wants and intents. It will be difficult, but not impossible, to measure audience members’ actions taken after being inspired by a HI experience, as evidenced by research undertaken by Ballantyne, Packer and Falk, and Hughes (Ballantyne, Packer, & Falk, 2011; Hughes, 2012). Offering visitor-oriented HI will require planning, as well as flexibility, learning, taking risks, having a positive attitude, and being grounded in the fundamentals of HI, i.e., best practices as outlined in Table 5. The ideas for visitor-oriented means of cultivating receptivity to inspiration as shown in Table 6 may also provide useful guidance to HI professionals for personalizing HI for visitors. For practical purposes interpreters may not be able to determine the visitors’ knowledge, experiences and beliefs prior to an interpretive program and with a large group may not be able to cater to all needs; however, being mindful that there will be differences and that a one size fits all approach is less than ideal, interpreters may be able to facilitate meaningful experiences through focusing on inspiring visitors, rather than on delivering predetermined messages.

Three bridges to achieving inspiration-based HI were identified throughout the research project. First, the means for achieving success in implementing inspiration-based HI were
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plentiful and are found in Tables 1, 5 and 6. The bridges to visitor-oriented HI that may cultivate
inspiration according to the research participants and the HI literature, include:

• knowing the audience;
• fostering connections to places and people’s experiences;
• considering interpretation an ongoing process, not a completed product;
• being inclusive and respectful, recognizing that people are individuals;
• encouraging meaning making, recognizing that people will connect in different
  ways;
• engaging visitors in active involvement, including using dialogic approaches;
• promoting mindfulness in visitors and interpreters;
• reducing cognitive focus;
• inviting emotions in; and
• de-centreing the interpreter, including facilitating more and educating less.

These suggestions seem to broaden the field beyond the instrumental knowledge-based
HI approach and may take the field back to Benton’s Phase 1, i.e., helping inspire and connect
visitors to the place and its resources (2009).

A second bridge for achieving success is to consider the concept of inspiration for staff,
as well as for visitors. Building on the passion of interpreters for what they do and encouraging
interpreters to be the inspiration agents for the agency may have benefits to visitors, staff and
agencies since inspiration has been shown to be contagious and self-perpetuating. It was
interesting to hear that interpreters were inspired by audience members; this suggests that there is
potential for inspiration to continue to grow as interpreters are inspired to inspire visitors, which in turn inspires the interpreters in a cycle of inspiration.

A third bridge to inspiration-based HI involves considering interpretation as a *process not a product*. HI is but one event in a person’s full life, and while it may play a role in inspiring them, as shown by the literature and my participants, we may never know the impact we have had since inspiration may not manifest until later, if at all. As described above, it is difficult, but not impossible, to measure the role that HI played in inspiring future action and studies into indicators of long-term behaviour change need to consider the influence of other factors such as “social desirability, lack of skills, resources and opportunities and habits...”(Hughes, 2012, p. 56). If HI is viewed as process and not product then interpreters may feel they can focus on the visitor’s inspiration and not just on delivering a product. Viewing HI as a process seems more like encouraging discourse and less like delivering a school course, as it acknowledges that learning and experiencing are ongoing for people and that the HI experience is just one small part of their lives.

**Convergence between Literature and Practice**

*Inspiration literature.* Most references to inspiration made by participants showed convergence with the inspiration literature, and all characteristics of inspiration as identified in the literature were described to some extent by participants, while some characteristics were referenced more than others. This lack does not necessarily show divergence with the inspiration literature; these least represented characteristics may or may not have shown up in more detail if more time had been devoted to the dialogue and if more participants were involved. The four
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areas where interpreters delved into subjects that I did not find in the inspiration literature are context specific to the HI field; namely, agency-related issues, measurement, provocation and the general role of inspiration in HI, and are areas for further consideration in inspiration research within the HI context.

Interpretation literature. Some points raised by participants supported the status quo, i.e., the education and information-based approach found widely in the HI literature, while others favoured the visitor-oriented, more holistic approach to HI, which is also found in the literature. For example, the use of themes in HI was only mentioned briefly twice throughout the dialogue on inspiration in interpretation. While the topic of themes may have come up in more detail with more time and more participants, the fact that it was only mentioned briefly may be an indication that themes do not play a central role in inspiration-based HI. Themes may be mainly cognitively focused, while inspiration-based HI broadens the scope to include the heart (inspired by) and hands (inspired to). Reducing emphasis on themes may require agencies to be less concerned with getting set messages across, and more concerned with providing exemplary inspirational experiences for visitors. The role of themes within inspiration-based HI warrants further investigation.

Tilden’s six principles (1977) were somewhat evident in the participant’s dialogue on inspiration. For example, the influence of Principle 4, i.e., the chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation, was evident in the discussion on the topic of provocation. If the terms inspiration and provocation are used interchangeably, Principle 4 may take on increased significance as a chief aim for the field. Tilden’s Principle 5, i.e., interpretation should aim to
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present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase, was evident in the inquiry in regards to the notion that HI needs to reach out to people at the level of their heads, hearts, and hands. Principle 6, i.e., that interpretation for children should involve a different approach than for adults, was not discussed directly, but the participants were strongly in favour of including fun, activity and the unexpected for all participants regardless of their age.

One topic that was raised by the participants that fits well with the nature of inspiration, was the idea of offering more unexpected experiences for visitors to surprise and delight them. The idea of being surprised and encouraging a sense of wonder may also be applicable to interpreters, as well as visitors, e.g., as noted by the participating interpreters who were inspired by first time and unexpected events, suggesting that new and fresh interactions with visitors will serve to inspire interpreters, who will then be inspired to share their passion and inspiration in, as described jokingly by one participant, as a “vicious cycle of inspiration.” The idea of offering the unexpected warrants further consideration by those wishing to offer visitor-oriented and inspiration-based HI.

Taking time for reflection is another topic that was not addressed in detail in this research project, but is described in some of the HI literature (Ballantyne, Packer, & Falk, 2011; Ballantyne & Packer, 2009; Hughes, 2012). The role of reflection during or after HI warrants further consideration as it may be a successful means of cultivating receptivity to inspiration. Studies into the role of reflection in inspiration-based HI would be instructive and concepts in
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the transformational learning discourse may be helpful (Clover, 2002; O’Sullivan, 1999; Taylor, 2000).

One obvious difference between the HI literature and the participant’s dialogue was evident in the amount of time devoted to the topic of inspiration. As noted in the review of the literature, there is minimal content on inspiration in the HI literature, while it was the focus of the research project. One interpreter noted that inspiration in HI used to be talked about more and that re-opening the dialogue was important:

I think that the term inspiration used to be treated with more respect, like Tilden talks about it in his book kind of casually like this is something all people do is go through life looking for spiritual uplift or which I call inspiration. I’m assuming that has something to do with it, enrichment of the human mind and spirit and I know he does use the word inspiration as well and [you] don’t hear it these days. Is it because we can’t measure it or is it because teachers and people who work for the federal government aren’t allowed to, delve into the realms?

Whatever the reasons that inspiration has not been much talked about in HI, I hope that my work will open the window and encourage the talk to either continue or commence.

In concluding this section, I note that convergences between the HI literature, the inspiration literature, and the practice of HI as described by participants, were found and have been reported throughout the dissertation.
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Future Research

This research project was exploratory and aimed to open dialogue into the topic; to continue the dialogue further research is required. The highest priority area of future study should involve talking with visitors regarding their views on inspiration, including what they are inspired by and to. Other topics to address may include:

- exploring the feasibility and desirability of measuring inspiration;
- exploring the connection between provocation and inspiration;
- incorporating more inspiration into HI in practice;
- examining the role of reflection in HI;
- studying the value of transformational learning theory as a contributor to inspiration-based HI;
- involving more interpreters in ongoing dialogue on the topic, including HI professionals from other countries beyond Canada and the United States; and
- considering how inspiration may help to guide non-personal HI, including the use of mass customization, i.e., through use of internet-based resources, as a means to develop inspiration-focused non-personal HI that is tailored to each visitor.

In addition, increased exploration into using WC and VWC for research purposes would contribute to the research methodology body of knowledge and these techniques may also be useful for other research projects in the HI field.
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**Recommendations**

The overall research question was “what could inspiration contribute to holistic heritage interpretation?” I stated at the outset that I believe the field of HI needs to broaden beyond a mainly education-based and cognitive focus. I believe, based on this exploration into the topic of inspiration in HI, that inspiration may provide a cohesive focus for the HI field and as an individual-focused concept it may encourage those of us in the practice of HI to think holistically and consider the visitors’ cognitive, affective and conative domains. This holistic focus should meet the needs of site visitors as well as agencies, given the recently stated desire by various agencies offering HI to place more emphasis on the visitor and their experiences. Agencies desperately need constituents and the existing instrumental knowledge-based approach in HI is not providing them in the numbers needed. The percentage of visitors who participate in HI is very low, e.g., 12% of visitors to U.S. national parks participate in interpretation (Stern et al., 2011) and research into whether it is the agency-oriented, liberal and behaviour-based education model that is deterring a broader constituent involvement in HI would be very interesting. Perhaps an inspiration-based focus in HI would broaden the appeal of HI through reaching out to visitors in different ways and from a different foundation. Such an approach may place more light on inspiration as it hovers quietly like a hot air balloon in the middle of the field of interpretation.

If inspiration *is* the purpose of HI, then consideration should be given to the overall intent of interpretation, i.e., what do we want visitors to be *inspired to*, as a result of interpretation? Some professionals may wish to continue to aim for the original purpose of HI as described in
Tilden’s dictum, i.e., protection of the resource. Quotes from participants indicated their belief that the overall purpose of HI is to save the world or make it a better place:

- If we all had one goal and I think probably we all have a goal that’s more similar that we know, we wouldn’t be in this line of work otherwise; that we want to save this wonderful planet.
- Save the world.
- Put our cape on.
- I think everybody has some kind of goal about saving or making the world a better place.

In inspiration-based HI, visitors would be engaged in active meaning making, encouraged to be mindful and motivated to learn, and enticed to experience more within the specific context of the place and its objects; goals that many now espouse in HI. Through inspiration, visitors to natural and cultural institutions and settings may find their experiences allow them to transcend the everyday and emerge with a new perspective. What they choose to do with this gift is up to them. Viewing HI from the perspective of inspiration gives interactions with visitors a whole new meaning; e.g., considering what inspires visitors in program planning and delivery may result in much different programming than focusing on agency messages.

HI must continue to provide measures of success to meet the needs of the sponsoring agencies; however, as described, inspiration may not be measurable. As the cohesive purpose of HI, inspiration may be the *guiding principle* and part of the vision and mission of the HI services. These broad directions are typically not measurable, while the more specific goals and
objectives that flow from the overall direction may be measured. Within an overall inspiration-based framework, the HI program could develop measures of success based on intent to inspire and then measure what we do offer.

For example, both quantitative and qualitative methods of evaluation could be undertaken and could involve asking visitors if they have been inspired, and if so by what, and to what end. The fact that inspiration may not manifest until later may be an issue; however, this does not preclude practitioners from keeping inspiration as a focus in what we can control, i.e., strategic planning, goals, program planning, delivery and visitor interactions. Resources to undertake ongoing evaluation, along with openness to creative qualitative and quantitative measures would need to be provided by agencies. Overall, taking an inspiration-based approach to HI would entail having potentially difficult conversations with management about the overall purpose of interpretation, the nature of the information, and realistic measures of success.

As shown in Figures 3 and 5, the two sides of inspiration may be seen as the black and white sides of a yin yang symbol. The curving line between the two sides represents the connection between the two elements and in the case of inspiration, represents the space between inspired by and inspired to. In the practice of HI we need to question how our work may act as a catalyst to help people make the leap from the one side to the other. As discussed in the research, sometimes there will be no time lag between the inspired by and inspired to stages and at other times we may not see the inspired to stage manifest in visitors. One of the roles of interpreters in inspiration-based HI is to work with audiences to develop ideas for inspired to actions that are
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relevant to audience members and the particular site of HI. Interpreters also need to be mindful that inspired to may manifest not in action, but in just being.

If inspiration already is the goal of HI, as suggested by some participants, then the definitions of HI should reflect it. This goal of inspiration should also be acknowledged by agencies and considered in strategic planning, training and program development, delivery and visitor interactions. Even if inspiration is not officially presented as the goal of HI, or of particular agency understandings, considering its characteristics would still be beneficial to agencies and visitors. For example, in the practice of HI this may be achieved by initiating program development with the question “what are people inspired by and to in the context of my particular heritage resource” rather than starting with the question “what are the themes and key messages I want to share with my audience?”

Inspiration-based HI may require a recommitment to focusing on the “real thing” in interpretation, as advocated by Tilden in his definition of interpretation. The real thing, i.e., the place or objects associated with the place, plays a key role in inspiring and interpreters need to be mindful of the role of place. As previously noted, often recipients of inspiration feel gratitude towards the source of inspiration. In the case of HI, this gratitude may be directed towards the interpreter, the place or the agency. Less emphasis on the interpreter and more emphasis on the visitor and the place or object or concept may be required.

If inspiration is the goal in HI, interpreters and agencies need to keep the following questions in mind:
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1. What are visitors inspired by and to? How may HI take both sides of inspiration into account?

2. How may HI be more holistic, i.e., consider people’s head, heart, and hands?

3. How may the characteristics of inspiration be used during planning and delivery of HI?

4. What is the role of behaviour change in inspiration-based HI?

5. How may taking a visitor-oriented approach help to inspire visitors?

6. How may increasing emphasis on the social aspects of HI inspire visitors?

And, finally, what is the role of the interpreter in inspiration-based HI? I maintain that the interpreter is definitely needed in inspiration-based HI as the interpreter provides an essential force in helping to bring the visitor and place/object/concept together. In Figure 10 I have provided an analogy for the roles of the interpreter, place, inspiration and the visitor. The visitor and place/object/concept are represented by the two ends of the incomplete knot. When the interpreter exerts a pulling force on both ends, i.e., through taking an inspiration-based approach, the visitor and the place/object/concept are connected and the knot is complete. In this analogy, the interpreter has been de-centred as advised in the results section, i.e., the interpreter is not at the centre between the visitor and the place/object/concept, but is a facilitator on the side, leaving the place/object/concept to work its magic on the visitor, recognizing that place or context-specific information will always be a necessary component of HI.
The role of the interpreter in inspiration-based HI is to:

- Bring the visitor and the place together and let the place or object or concept work its magic;
- Recognize that visitors bring their previous knowledge, experiences and backgrounds;
- Encourage visitors to make meaning that is relevant to them;
- Realize that the visitors may not be there to learn, but may be there to be inspired; and
- Acknowledge that what the visitors do after their experience is out of the control of the interpreter but will only happen if it is meaningful to the visitor.
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What is the role of the agency in inspiration-based HI? Agencies may need to undergo a transformation in order to be more visitor-oriented. For example, as described by Scharmer and Kaufer (2013), agencies need to shift from an ego-system focus to an eco-system focus. This shift would require an organization to move from being internally-oriented to being intention and co-creating driven. Such a shift in agencies offering HI may result in more direct, distributed, democratic and dialogic interactions with visitors (Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013). Some specific ideas for inspiration-based agency actions resulting from this inquiry include:

- Encourage follow up with visitors as a means to determine the impact of the visit, i.e., were they inspired and what were they inspired to do or be?
- Consider offering holistic HI, including cognitive, affective and conative elements;
- Consider the behavioural domain, and decide if behaviour change is a desired and achievable outcome of HI;
- Recognize that meaning is not inherent in the place or objects, but instead resides in people, who will naturally all have different perspectives; and
- Acknowledge the valuable role interpreters may play in facilitating connections between visitors and place, which may result in an increase in number of participants in HI and an increase in number of constituents for the place/object/concept.

Offering HI that is visitor-oriented has been presented as a means to inspire. I believe that most interpreters do try to be visitor-oriented and suggest that as a means to improve their
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interpretation, they look objectively at their own personal and non-personal HI for ways to be even more visitor-oriented and to consider their expectations and seek for realistic achievements. For example, interpreters described that they are inspired by telling stories, while a more visitor-oriented approach would have the audiences actively involved in meaning making through telling their own stories as well.

Inspiration touches people at a holistic level; it emphasizes the head and heart through the triggers or inspired by side of the concept, and it involves action through the target or inspired to side of the concept. Keeping both sides in mind in HI will help professionals consider the needs of the individuals, as well as the needs of the agency. In the holistic HI triangle shown in Figure 11, inspiration and its characteristics may be seen as the centre point, i.e., at the juncture of all three domains. The head or cognitive domain is not at the apex of the triangle, although information itself will likely always play a key role in HI.
Developing and delivering this dissertation has been quite a journey for me and while this document is the required end product, I look forward to continuing to explore the topic of inspiration in HI. I was pleased to test the use of VWC for research purposes and believe that, while internet-based research is in its infancy, it holds much promise as a new method for involving people in dialogue, especially across wide geographic boundaries. While I had issues with the research methods, did not achieve the number of participants throughout the process as I would have liked, and do not feel that the action research approach was as successful as it could have been, I believe my findings provide a starting point for continued explorations into inspiration in HI. Through post-doctoral communications, I will share the results of my explorations into the topic as well as into the use of internet-based tools for research purposes and hope that my insights will be useful to other researchers. Using the VWC format was successful for exploring the topic of inspiration in HI with North American professionals; and I
am now interested in exploring ways WC and VWC may be used with visitors in HI practice, i.e., could inspiration be fostered through involving visitors in dialogue on topics that matter, when guided by the right questions? I look forward to continuing the dialogue.

Currently, HI seems to be agency-based and uses the instrumental knowledge approach, in which liberal and behaviourist models of education dominate. This approach fails to consider what the visitor brings to the experience, it places undue emphasis on information, and it also fails to consider the contested nature of information and heritage. Inspiration may provide a new approach to HI, in which the whole visitor is considered, i.e., the cognitive, affective and conative domains, and through consideration of the characteristics of inspiration and visitor-oriented HI, visitors are encouraged to make meaning and connect to place on their own terms. It is my hope that looking at HI through the lens of inspiration will bring new guidance to the HI field and bring balance to what has been an overly cognitive and agency focus in HI. Looking ahead to the future of HI, perhaps it is time to update Tilden’s dictum. With inspiration as a base, perhaps it could read simply “through interpretation, inspiration.”
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References


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Appendix A Letter of Informed Consent

Jacquie Gilson, MSc., Doctoral Candidate
Doctor of Social Sciences Program

April 3, 2014

Greetings,

Thank you for agreeing to be involved in the research project, *Inspiring hearts, minds and hands through interpretation*. This is a doctoral research study into the roles of inspiration and participation in holistic heritage interpretation. While much of the information in this letter of informed consent may already be familiar to you, please review the details and sign it before your participation.

The purpose of the study is to explore ways that inspiration and participation could contribute to holistic heritage interpretation. I am seeking research participants who are willing to look at interpretation in a new light and who are willing to consider alternatives to current practice. This exploratory research project centres on dialogue between interpretation managers, supervisors and front line interpreters and will hopefully expand your understanding of interpretation.

Your involvement will consist of approximately 16 hours over six months from April to September, 2014. The time commitment details and study phases are as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Phases and Timing</th>
<th>Time Commitment (approximate)</th>
<th>Types of Data Collection</th>
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| **Phase 1.** Introductory Online World Café forum (late April 2014-date TBD) | • 90 minutes to review materials on your own.  
• Thirty minutes to test the web-based program with researcher.  
• Two and a half hours in web-based focus group dialogue. | 1. Digital audio recordings of dialogue  
2. Textual (typed) communications during the World Cafe  
3. Graphic recordings created in the conclusion of the World Cafe |
| **Phase 2.** Action-Reflection-Reporting (Summer 2014) | Seven hours on your own to test out and report on new ideas resulting from World Cafe. | 1. Textual (typed) communications created and posted on the online group bulletin board by participants |
| **Phase 3.** Concluding Online World Café forum (late September 2014-date TBD) | • 90 minutes to review materials on your own.  
• Thirty minutes to test the web-based program with researcher.  
• Two and a half hours in web-based focus group dialogue. | 1. Digital audio recordings of dialogue  
2. Textual (typed) communications during the World Cafe  
3. Graphic recordings created in the conclusion of the World Cafe |
World Café, also known as Strategic Café, Knowledge Café, and Conversation Café, is a dialogue-oriented focus group research method created by Juanita Brown and David Isaacs in 1995 and is aimed at encouraging “conversations that matter”. The online WC is a new approach to using the method in which participants from a wide geographic area can engage in conversation. For more information on World Café as a forum for conversation, see www.theworldcafe.com.

During the two online World Café forums in April and September of 2014 you will engage in dialogue with other interpretation professionals from a variety of interpretive sites across North America. To successfully participate, you will require Wi-Fi high speed internet access, as well as a head set with speakers and a microphone to ensure clear and quality sound for all participants. The dialogue will be digitally recorded and, along with typed comments, will be saved for analysis. Graphic recordings, i.e., visual representations of the dialogue, will be created at the end of each World Café.

The discussions will revolve around professional topics and no personally sensitive issues are anticipated. We expect no harm, financial costs or inconveniences to you, although you will be required to provide internet service and it will require some of your valuable time (for which I am extremely grateful). The benefits to you as a participant may include opportunities to network with colleagues from across North America, to view interpretation through new lenses, to learn more about yourself by reflecting on your values and through the group dialogue, and to contribute to the advancement of the field of interpretation. The results of the research will provide insights into strategic planning, training program development and visitor program development and delivery in heritage interpretation; all topics that could help you realize greater successes and fulfillment in your work.

The internet interface we will use is www.Maestroconference.com and it will be free to you as a participant. Technical assistance will be provided to you before and during the forums if required. One of the services offered by Maestro Conference is a social webinar function. Using this exciting new tool we have the ability to post photos of ourselves for viewing by the other research participants only while in the break-out discussion groups. This helps create an experience that is more like being in a room together. Submitting a photo for this purpose is optional on your part.

As a doctoral student with Royal Roads University and an employee of the government of Canada with the Parks Canada Agency, I will be in a dual role with potential conflicts of interest. I will be mindful of this dual role at all times and seek to act with fairness, integrity and transparency in all dealings. All participants will be involved voluntarily and if associated with an organization, you will not be expected to represent that organization during the study. Loss of anonymity will occur for participants in the forum; however, I will maintain participant confidentiality in all reports. As a participant, you agree to keep confidential the dialogue and comments throughout the study.

Your involvement in the study is entirely voluntary and you have the right to choose not to answer any question. You also have the right to withdraw from any discussions or the study without prejudice at any time. If you do withdraw from the study or discussions, I will seek your permission to maintain your previously recorded comments in the data set, as these comments cannot easily be separated out of a group discussion and recording.

The study findings may be used in journal articles, online media, and other materials, for example, published or non published, commercial or non commercial. The copyrights to all the content will reside with the researcher.

Participants were invited to join the research project through professional interpretation organizations and have completed an application form on my webpage (www.inspirationresearch.org). The webpage is on the Internet and is therefore open to non interpretation individuals. You are
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encouraged to exercise caution before sharing your personal information with other research group members.

In order to protect your privacy, anonymity and confidentiality, I will commit to the following:

- You have the right to use a pseudonym throughout your involvement in the study if you choose. In my reports I will use pseudonyms that are different from any used in the study to identify the results obtained from individual participants. Your name will not appear on any final documentation; although, if you give permission, your organization name will be listed.
- The dialogue will be digitally recorded, transcribed and analyzed using the group discussion as the unit of analysis. Comments will be analyzed at the individual participant level only if it seems necessary for comprehension.
- All data collected will remain confidential; conversations and typed comments will be kept on a secure hard drive in a locked container.
- I will not share your personal information with any other members of the research group, other than your name, photo and organization, provided you give permission to do so.
- Only specified individuals will have access to raw data or identifying information. They will be required to complete a research advisory team letter of agreement to ensure they know their obligations in regards to having access to raw data.
- Once the study is complete, all data records and documentation will be archived in a secure, locked location and destroyed after five years.
- I will secure your permission for disposal of the digital media and will specify how and when this will occur. I will also seek your approval for use of the digital recordings for any purpose beyond the current study.


Final research findings and recommendations will be disseminated to all participants by email once the research has been completed, and the doctorate has been awarded. Participants will be provided with access to the full dissertation and published journal articles, and will be invited to presentations and workshops on the topics.

If you would like to verify the authenticity or any details of the research project, please feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr. Rick Kool at xxx. Alternatively, you may contact Dr. Bernard Schissel, Program Head, Doctor of Social Sciences Program, Royal Roads University at xxx. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have at any time and may be reached on my cell phone at xxx.

If you understand the information outlined above and consent to be a participant, please complete the information on the next page, sign your name and indicate the date. Please return it to me via email by **April 10, 2014**. It is assumed that consent has been given with an electronic return. After receiving your signed consent form, I will send you more details on the study, including reading materials on World Café, as well as on inspiration and participation in interpretation.

Thank you. I look forward to having you participate in this research on inspiring heads, hearts and hands through heritage interpretation!

Sincerely,
Jacquie Gilson, Doctoral Candidate, Doctor of Social Sciences, Royal Roads University
INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

Inspiration in Interpretation Research Project
Consent Form

Please complete, scan and return via email the following page:

1. Your Name:

2. Name you wish to be known by within the research group (if different):

3. OPTIONAL- Do you give permission to the researcher to share your photo with the research group only, during the World Cafe sessions and on the group bulletin board?

   Yes or No Initial _____
   If yes, please submit a close up photo of yourself with this consent form.

4. Your Mailing Address:

5. Your Organization:

6. Do you give permission for your organization name to be shared with the research participants and included in reports?

   Yes or No Initial _____
   Note- your own name will not be included in any reports.

7. I have reviewed the information in this consent letter and form and I consent to participate in the Inspiration in Interpretation Research Project :

   Participant Signature:

   Date:
Appendix B Virtual World Café Menu of Questions May, 2014

The World Café is an innovative yet simple methodology for hosting conversations about questions that matter. These conversations link and build on each other as people move between groups, cross-pollinate ideas, and discover new insights into the questions or issues that are most important to their life, work, or community. As a process, the World Café can evoke and make visible the collective intelligence of any group, thus increasing people’s capacity for effective action in pursuit of common aims.

Brown and Isaacs (2005)

**Table Host** (30 min.)
Table Hosts share the key points of QI and QA from the previous table to the new table group. At end of Terzo round, group selects one or more reporters (preferably not the Table Host) to present the Terzo conversation to the plenary in the Dele round.

**Questions:**
5. If you could change one thing about your current work that would help move you closer to your vision of “inspiration-based” interpretation, what would that be?

**Dele:** (10 min.)
All groups present their key thoughts from the Secondo & Terzo Rounds to whole group, as Graphic Recorder works (3-5 minutes per group).

**Questions:**
6. What new ideas or patterns have emerged through today’s dialogue?
7. How could you act on the suggestions that resulted from today’s dialogue, over the summer and over the long term? What would you like to see as a result of this research?

Closing Comments & Next Steps (10 min.)

**Closing:**

Refreshment & bio-break: Please take as needed!
World Café Co-Host:
Jacque Fiolon; Nalini Agar Gupta.
Appendix C Virtual World Café Menu of Questions September, 2014

**Antipasto** (30 min.)
Overview of the Café
Informed Consent

Questions:
1. Please introduce yourself, share where you are located geographically and briefly answer the question: What has your work been inspired by, and what did it prompt you to do, within your job as interpreter?

**Prime** (30 min.)
Discuss at tables of no more than 4 participants per table. Choose a Table Host who will keep track of key points and summarize them to share at the start of the next round.

Questions:
1. What are audiences' or your own inspiration, and what are they inspired to do? Please share examples whenever possible.
2. Are we talking about the inspiring World Café, inspiration must be focused upon people; however, it may be evolved. How could interpretation help participants to receive inspiration?

**Secondo** (30 min.)
Discuss at tables of no more than 4 participants per table. Start by sharing points from the last round. Choose a Table Host who will keep track of key points and summarize them to share at the start of the next round.

Questions:
1. How could we meet the needs of our audiences while focusing on inspiring activity?

**Toro** (30 min.)
Group as a whole group. Each group presents their key thought from the previous table round, as the Global Write the words (5 minutes per group).

Questions:
1. What new ideas or patterns have emerged through today's dialogue?
2. How might you change your plans, training or programs development after today's dialogue on inspiration as interpretation?
3. What suggestions do you have for how this group might continue to meet and engage with each other?

**Dolce** (30 min.)
Share in small groups. Each group presents their key thought from the previous table round, as the Global Write the words (5 minutes per group).

Questions:
1. What new ideas or patterns have emerged through today's dialogue?
2. How might you change your plans, training or programs development after today's dialogue on inspiration as interpretation?
3. What suggestions do you have for how this group might continue to meet and engage with each other?

**Closing Remarks & Next Steps** (5 min.)


World Café Co-Moderators:
Jacque Gibson, Nishi Aggarwal
Appendix D LinkedIn Questions

1. Please share any thoughts or ideas you have had on the topic of inspiration in interpretation since you participated in the Virtual World Café (or general thoughts on inspiration in interpretation if you were not able to participate in the World Cafes).

   What ideas resonated with you and how are you able to incorporate them into your work in interpretation?

2. How do you think participation within interpretation could be increased? What do you think is the connection between participation in interpretation and inspiration?

3. Holistic interpretation involves reaching our visitors at the cognitive (head), affective (heart) and connative (hands and feet, i.e., action) levels.

   How do you think focusing on inspiration in interpretation could contribute to holistic interpretation?

4. The World Cafe seeks to provide opportunities for conversations that matter and is centred on seven guidelines, i.e., clarify the purpose, create hospitable space, explore questions that matter, encourage everyone’s contribution, connect diverse perspectives, listen for insights and share discoveries.

   a. Please share your thoughts in regards to the first virtual World Cafe providing an opportunity for having “conversations that matter.”
   b. Please share your thoughts on the first virtual World Cafe in regards to the guidelines listed above.
   c. Please provide suggestions for achieving success in the fall virtual World Cafe.
## Appendix E NVivo Data Sources

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<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<td>2. Transcription for Audio 1 Primo Round, May 9</td>
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<td>11. September VWC plenary- First section, Sept. 26</td>
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<td>12. September VWC plenary- Second and Third sections, Sept. 26,</td>
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<td>13. September VWC plenary- Final section, Sept. 26</td>
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<td>Participant notes (9 different sources)</td>
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<td>15. Notes from participant during VWC May 23</td>
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<td>16. Notes by participant VWC May 9</td>
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<td>17. Table host notes VWC May 9</td>
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<td>20. Co-facilitator notes VWC May 9</td>
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<td>22. Notes from participants received by Oct. 26</td>
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<td>28. 5 LinkedIn record for discussion on process</td>
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## Appendix F NVivo Nodes

Note- child nodes aggregated to parent nodes

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**INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION**

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## INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

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### INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

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<td>create something</td>
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<td>ask and answer questions</td>
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<td>take action, change behaviour</td>
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<td>to remember after</td>
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<td>B. Interps do something</td>
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<td>be inspired and energized</td>
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### INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

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<td>Make changes to interp program</td>
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<td>Try new things</td>
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<td>Learn more</td>
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<td>Get to know resource</td>
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<td>Love history</td>
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<td>Take action for a better world</td>
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<td>Space for vulnerability</td>
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<td>2. Take risks</td>
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<td>Permission to fail</td>
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<td>Takes courage and experience</td>
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<td>Try new and innovative ideas</td>
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### INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

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<td>know the subject matter</td>
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<td>meeting needs of agency and visitors</td>
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<td>theme needed</td>
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<td>we allow</td>
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<td>flexibility needed</td>
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<td>good to have structure to build on</td>
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<td>need clear idea of purpose</td>
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<td>we lead</td>
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<table>
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<td>interps networking</td>
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<tr>
<td>know your resource</td>
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<tr>
<td>more experienced the interp the more effective</td>
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<td>research needed</td>
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<td>training needed</td>
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<td>visiting other sites</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>a. based on fundamentals (see also 2 C.)</td>
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<td>especially if not part of regular job</td>
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<td>get away from paperwork</td>
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<tr>
<td>tell stories</td>
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<tr>
<td>use universal concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. visitor- focused</td>
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<td>170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Be inclusive and respectful                   | 9    | 12  |
| don’t over promise                            | 1    | 1   |
| don’t preach                                  | 3    | 3   |
| treat people with respect                     | 6    | 6   |

| Consider interpretation an ongoing process    | 2    | 5   |
| spending more time with people more likely leads to inspiration | 1    | 3   |

| De-centre the interpreter                     | 10   | 21  |
| dial back passion                             | 1    | 9   |
| don’t be intimidating                         | 1    | 1   |
| facilitate not educate                        | 5    | 6   |
| facilitators not didactic                     | 1    | 1   |
### INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>let resource speak for itself</td>
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<tr>
<td>seeing the light in their eyes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage meaning making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engage visitors in active involvement</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>reveal meanings rather than telling</td>
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<tr>
<td>use dialogic approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>use social media- people want two way</td>
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<tr>
<td>working together towards a common goal</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster connections</td>
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<tr>
<td>connect people with sense of place</td>
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<tr>
<td>connecting to surroundings</td>
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<tr>
<td>stress uniqueness of site</td>
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<tr>
<td>understanding surroundings</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>connect to something in their lives</td>
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<tr>
<td>connections between sites or organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Invite emotions in</td>
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<tr>
<td>aim to reach head heart and hands</td>
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<tr>
<td>need to be receptive to inspiration</td>
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<tr>
<td>help them be in the moment</td>
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<tr>
<td>need to express self</td>
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<tr>
<td>need to have passion</td>
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<tr>
<td>to inspire interp has to be inspired</td>
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<td>Know the audience</td>
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<tr>
<td>ask visitors what inspires them</td>
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<tr>
<td>provide different viewpoints</td>
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<tr>
<td>need to start where audience is at</td>
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<td>Reduce cognitive focus</td>
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<td>beyond the cognitive</td>
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<td>Stress mindfulness</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. focused on inspiration (see also 1.)</td>
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<td>inspiration starts with interps</td>
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<td>look through different windows</td>
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<td>play the inspiration card</td>
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<td>recognize inspiration</td>
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<tr>
<td>step back and let inspiration flow</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. try unique activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>create whole experience not just individual</td>
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Note: The table provides a summary of various strategies and actions suggested to inspire in heritage interpretation.
### Inspiration in Heritage Interpretation

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<td>interp that is taken to them</td>
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<tr>
<td>jolt out of complacency</td>
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<td>surprise and delight people</td>
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<td>a variety of ways</td>
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<td>actions they control</td>
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<tr>
<td>learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>understanding something new</td>
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<td>instilling wonder</td>
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<td>tell positive stories not just negative</td>
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<td>environment</td>
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<td>discover and care- two levels</td>
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<td>take action</td>
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<td>reduce number of phone calls</td>
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### 4. Focus on Agency

| Accountability to agency                                                 | 21| 204|
### INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

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<td>C. How to measure inspiration in interp</td>
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<td>plant litter, measure how much is picked up</td>
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<td>D. Frustration with agency</td>
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<td>lack of support for interp</td>
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<td>E. Need to consider Agency Direction</td>
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<td>need to create safe places</td>
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<td>F. Need to meet needs of agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>specific needs of agency</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agency needs stewardship, inspiration can help</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>balance between agency and visitors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>balancing budgets</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Invitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>be relevant to community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can be met by good interp</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paperwork</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>role of inspiration in agency</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how could agencies meet needs to inspire</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inspiration is part of agency direction</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maybe inspiration means less paperwork</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Process Notes and housekeeping</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>introductions and Names</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>189</td>
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<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participants</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personal notes or requests</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>process</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>161</td>
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<td>quotable</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>references to famous people</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>research questions</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staying in touch after</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supportive comments</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>107</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Cafe process</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix G Summary of interpreter stories reflecting inspired by and inspired to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspired by</th>
<th>Inspired to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hearing from a parent about the effects the program had on their child</td>
<td>Continue to help families connect with nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking urban children to nature where they experience sunrise for first time</td>
<td>Tell the story in the World Cafe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to a great presenter</td>
<td>Tell stories and make changes to a program to make for a better connection with people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a family member of an historic character tell a different side of a story</td>
<td>Retell the story on other tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing of the impact you had on children</td>
<td>Find people who inspired you and tell them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving letters from visitors</td>
<td>Keep doing what you do, have a sense of purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues who excel</td>
<td>Stay inspired, especially in a workplace with few or no other interpreters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with special needs group and hearing that they got something out of the interpretation</td>
<td>Learn more about working with special needs groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern lights bonding with students</td>
<td>Keep going on expeditions and sharing enthusiasm for astronomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things the interpreter reads or hears about from other places</td>
<td>Try new ideas, take risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to other sites</td>
<td>Look outside the box and see how it can be run differently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn more ourselves</td>
<td>Share it with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The power of interpretation to inspire visitors and staff</td>
<td>Keep focused on those big dreams about what we’re ultimately trying to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing an historic character</td>
<td>Learn more about the historic character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A visitation by a bald eagle while already having a wonderful time on an interpretive program</td>
<td>Everybody was lifted to another level and the program became a lot more meaningful, all had stars in their eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking kids on first camping experience and on a hike to a volcanic crater</td>
<td>Inspired to keep providing activities for kids of all ages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An engaging interpreter</td>
<td>Go back to the site and look for the interpreter again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An article on inspiring hearts and minds in interpretation</td>
<td>Study inspiration in interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing the enthusiasm in young people out of their element at a conference in another country</td>
<td>Keep going in doing what you do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonding while standing on a beach at night with other interpreters who were so passionate about</td>
<td>Try some new programming and get back out there and do some programming again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Inspiration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the night sky</td>
<td>Tell the story in the World Cafe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watched grandfather and grandson bond over the years of visiting the site</td>
<td>Tell the story in the World Cafe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing an interpretive program that was different and risky</td>
<td>Become a wolverine nerd and take more risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being part of a continuum of time, on the same mountain as a child and adult</td>
<td>Help people be safe and understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding an historic trail that nobody knew was there</td>
<td>Love history as long as can see it and touch it and be on it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training enthusiastic new staff</td>
<td>Get back to that roots of what interpretation is all about and be reinvigorated towards interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing what staff put together with fairly limited resources</td>
<td>Be motivated and remember why we're here and why we do this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returning visitor who enjoys interactions with the wildlife</td>
<td>See people visiting the same building over and over and getting different experiences based on who they are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street theatre performers</td>
<td>Create an interactive bear program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children returning to share a find with the interpreter</td>
<td>Know he was making a difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New staff, fresh blood that's coming in with fresh eyes</td>
<td>Remember why we're here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being invited to take part in the conversation about inspiration</td>
<td>A great learning experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building more of an interpretive program</td>
<td>Continue to build program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing audience reaction to unstructured time</td>
<td>Bring in unstructured time and put students in situations where they can try things they don't get a chance to do in the inner city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking a certification course in interpretation</td>
<td>Develop new training for volunteers, re-done some programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging youth in an online venue</td>
<td>Think about the audience and what they like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking part in a webinar on education for sustainable development</td>
<td>Look back at an earlier textbooks on interpretation, realize inspiration used to be written about more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspiring passion in people</td>
<td>Look for new ways to inspire and to do cross discipline events, anything educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in a multi stakeholder planning group</td>
<td>Work together to come to common ground</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H General interpreter-based actions for cultivating receptivity to inspiration in HI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpreter Actions</th>
<th>Participant Quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Do interpretation, with fundamentals as base (Referenced 36 times) | “This is all about the basics of interpretation. It is what we do. You need to be able to read your audiences, know techniques for drawing shy people out and managing know-it-alls. More experience dealing with people makes you more effective.”

“Tell the stories, whether about the building or people or about the animals that we have here or we used to have here on site.”

“[Interpretation is] what inspires me to keep going through the somewhat dull administrative parts in my job.”

“...using universal concepts...” |
| Plan, but be flexible (Referenced 28 times) | “Planning allows us to answer the question, ‘what are we trying to achieve in interpretation?’ ‘what is the purpose, what is the objective of that inspiration?’”

“I've got to understand this subject matter enough myself in order for me to excite someone else about it.”

“We can just forget the outline for a little bit and deviate and allow that discovery to happen with the group.”

“Save the plan if something else happens, if something else is interesting to the group, you would be able to put the plan away.” |
| Take risks (Referenced 21 times) | “Inspired to take more risks in doing that type of program and not always relying on being cute and funny and being able to do things that are a bit more dramatic, serious and emotional.”

“It takes a lot of courage too and experience, to try to do it in a way that gets more deeper connections and better results.” |
| Learn, including networking and visiting other sites (Referenced 19 times) | “When I first started doing this I didn’t realize that there were other people like me and they wanted to talk to each other so I’m really excited to be part of this.”

“There are a few organizations like the National Association for Interpretation in the States or Interpretation Canada and lots of ways to connect...especially with the advent of all the technology online these days.”

“I always try to find a site near to me if I have to go somewhere for work, even on my own vacation I try to find where’s the closest park site that I
| Have a positive attitude and share the passion (Referenced 7 times) | “We were really starting to crystallize something important for me and that was the danger of the bad visitor story when you come back after a program and you debrief the crazy thing that just happened and how prone we are to doing that more than sharing the stories of the visitors that are inspired or the great things that are happening.”

“I’m like many interpreters where it’s woven into the fabric of everything you do, whether it’s work or play.”

“We’re all about the profession; every interpreter I’ve met is so passionate about what they do.” |
Appendix I Visitor-oriented recommendations resulting from literature themes and participant discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes from Literature Review</th>
<th>Participant Quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Engage visitors in active involvement. (Referenced 37 times)</td>
<td>“They could go and bring things to our tank. We had live things in the tank and people could add to that.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Involving them “gives the visitor a sense of ownership over their conclusions and therefore inspires them to take their own actions.”

“More and more I think people participate these days when they can contribute to a two-way exchange of ideas and information, rather than simply being the recipients of information, interpretation and inspiration.”

“In our ‘participation age’ many people expect to participate in a two-way dialogue, rather than just to consume one-way messages, regardless of whether technology is involved or not.”

“For instance, participation can be increased by making something fun, by making it easy to participate, by creating incentives for participation, by creating those ‘15 seconds of glory’ moments...”

“Structuring programs so that we're not necessarily the didactic authority but rather asking them what they're interested in and involving them in provocative conversations is a good way to make sure they see the relevance and walk away inspired.”

“I really like that idea of inviting the audiences in and that's one of the things that we're gonna be trying this summer, is, it’s gonna be an informal campfire chat, at one of our campgrounds.”

“I talked about a dialogical approach to interpreting, structuring informal conversations driven by people.”

“Take a more dialogic approach to our programs to invite our audiences to co-create more with us, whatever that means, whether it's having more conversation in programs, whether it's crafting a program that addresses the needs that your visitors have already expressed, cause you know you can query them early in the program or letting them talk to each other.”

It’s more participatory, it’s more fitting with the digital world that we find ourselves in where people expect to be able to contribute...
and they expect to be more of a part of things and they expect to be more active in what’s happening, have more choice.”

“We are getting into this facilitated dialogue. It might be neat to be the one to ask the question completely open-ended.”

“Participation, and the level an individual is willing to participate, are so unique and diverse amongst visitors that I feel it’s almost impossible to design interpretive elements that can cater to all.”

2. Foster connections to places and people’s lives.
   (Referenced 36 times)
   “Let the power of place work, they will jump in.”

   “Really making sure that the story that we're telling is unique to that location within the park so that they can realize that, ‘wow, I'm learning something here that I might not learn anywhere else,’ so that's totally unique to here and as I'm creating my own story by experiencing this place.”

   “Even the most distant of visitor should be able to relate the concept of an exhibit or activity through something they have back home.”

3. Be inclusive and respectful of individuality.
   (Referenced 29 times)
   “To inspire them to take action, so rather than preaching about things… provoke and relate, otherwise it sounds preachy.”

   “That everyone is different and not everyone is artistic, but people will be inspired in different ways.”

   “What's gonna be inspirational for one person might be exact opposite to somebody else.”

   “…that we're providing various viewpoints.”

   “So that they feel inclusive, making people feel included in the group.”

   “Just like we want respect for ourselves, making sure that we are giving that same respect to everyone we're communicating with.”

4. Invite emotions in.
   (Referenced 23 times)
   “Inspiration drives us strive to hit that sweet spot where all three (head, heart, hands) overlap and we have the greatest impact.”

   “Through activities that are more in the artistic realm, like doing photography, some sort of art, getting them to look at things, seeing things in a different way and call on their creative spirit to reach inspiration in that way.”

   “Interpreters are there to get people excited and the public relations communication types are there to calm everybody
| **5. Know the audience.** | “It helps connect to your emotions…it takes you out of your mind closer to your emotions, your feelings…”

“Every experience you design for your visitor you're consciously thinking of bringing those four elements together and I added a fifth from my own experiences as an interpreter which is emotion, getting that **emotional connection** to our subject—as we know emotion increases learning.”

(Referenced 22 times) |
| **6. De-centre the interpreter.** | “Connecting with your audience by trying to **get to know them in advance**, in the case of education, talking to teachers and students and then adjusting your messages for their level and their life experiences that they already have, being able to read your audience.”

“So obviously there is a need to **know your audience** and make that program more about facilitating conversation and answering their questions and providing opportunities to explore.”

“You need to be able to **read your audiences.**”

(Referenced 21 times) |
| **7. Consider interpretation an ongoing process.** | “They found teachers upon **repeat visits** would actually have a better experience each time for their class because they’d learn more and more and more.”

“In my career, trying to inspire the people who inspire me. I’ve often taken the time to see if I could **track them down** even if it’s years later to reconnect with them and say I was one of the groupies at every single interp program.”

“I felt like time was just swirling around me. I was very inspired”

(Referenced 20 times) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to be part of that continuum.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“One thing in our park that I’d love to be able to change... would be to get people more involved in doing things like going out and monitoring and helping with the various activities and contributing I think that would be a way of increasing inspiration.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Promote mindfulness in visitors and staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Referenced 9 times)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Trying to find ways to make them be in the moment.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“And to be yourself and be in the moment yourself, so that they will want to jump in with you as well.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visitors “need to be ready in some way, where they’re open to it.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Use your own inspiration and enthusiasm so people feel free to behave that way themselves. Be in the moment.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Encourage meaning making.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Referenced 8 times)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Giving them actual examples and letting them come to their own conclusions seems to work better than just hitting them over the head with the proverbial hammer, saying ‘This is bad!’”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“I also think we have to be very careful about deciding what they want. It might be interesting in a program to say, ‘what inspires you?’”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I really like her idea about asking participants what inspires them.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Sometimes you may see people that are using their smart phones but maybe they are using technology to get connected.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“In fact I’ve tried to put a little seed in there, if you feel strongly about this, what could you do?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“And I think that relates to peoples’ personal inspiration, I like that, rather than putting words in their hands, or telling people how they should think or feel or what they should do, which is not learning or its not interpretation, it’s not inspiration, but when you open that window, I think that’s an inspiration. You know like you were doing there by saying if you did feel this, what could you do, leaving it up to them.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“It might be neat to be the one to ask the question completely open ended, any answer is correct.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Reduce cognitive focus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|   | “There’ll be a theme; obviously, to each night but let the audience
It was a completely new experience for me because it was trying to *provoke interest without giving any information* at all basically, but it was really trying to think about the audience and what they like."

"But it could also be thinking about it in a way that affects your attitudes, or affects your values or affects other things *beyond the cognitive*.”

Note- referenced numbers are estimates based on coding in NVivo.
## Appendix J Required actions to move closer to inspiration-based HI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Actions</th>
<th>Sample of Relevant Participant Quotes</th>
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</table>
| **1. Agency-related:**  
A.) More agency support, in the form of resources, such as staff, time and money, as well as support in the form of allowing risk taking and being values driven.  
B.) Less agency concern with time consuming administrative tasks, including interpreters having to constantly justify interpretation. | “If you don't have the money, if you don't have the management support and if you're constantly having to justify things, it's hard to focus on interpretation, so obviously resources of any sort, whether it be training or money or more staff, would help us move closer to inspiration-based interpretation.”  
“In order for inspiration to happen, it would be nice to be able to surround around ourselves with inspiration and sometimes that's difficult in positions where you might be isolated in a park or in an agency, where there's not a lot of other people doing the same thing and ah, so having agency valuing what we do and having knowledge of what we do and how it works is really valuable to be able to work towards inspiration.” |
| **2. Interpreters being inspired and sharing their passion:**  
A.) with visitors, through visitor-oriented approaches, i.e., dialogic approaches, taking the interpretation to them, and co-creating.  
B.) with other staff, through shared learning, being supportive, and having a shared purpose. | “As an interpreter we talk about having that passion inside us and how that helps us help people connect to whatever it is that we're interpreting and I think that interpretation is related to the passion in interpreters.”  
“I think there's something to be said for stepping back at some point once you've helped people make that connection. You don't have to be the centre of the stage, but I certainly feel that the excitement and the passion have a role to play.”  
“I would love everybody to always be dressed in living history outfits.”  
“Just to ask them, what inspires you?”  
“I would like to think I applied some of the same techniques for inspiration with my staff.”  
“There's always a bit of the interpreter inside of me that's ON and is trying to inspire in some way whether it's to inspire a change in our organization whether it is to inspire a visitor to see something different about our world and space or whether it's to inspire another organization to work with ours towards our common goals.”  
“We have a tendency in this profession to think about our practice of interpretation as being limited to visitors, when in fact it is in everything we do... that's our challenge – is to be inspirational in all our work.” |
| 3. Being aware of inspiration and willing to consider it in interpretation, including considering the spiritual and emotional sides. | “Sharing the positive side of things more than just the negative side.”

“You've got to be inspired yourself in order to try help others find that inspiration.”

“Take a more dialogic approach to our program to invite our audiences to co-create more with us.”

“We can create that emotional connection first through things like the tools just like storytelling and then you can put in the facts and the information that we wanna get across within that in a way that people get engage they, they connect before you can even start to move people to some kind of an action or change of mind.”

“If there is a shared sense of what you are together trying to accomplish and when that is part of everything you do and not just a part of the interpretation when it’s not just a handful of scattered people holding the torch but when everyone is on fire inside for the same goal, I think that really makes a big difference.”

“I think there’s a difference being stuck with your send button down and telling people stuff they don’t wanna hear and talking too much and hogging the center of attention when actually you wanna connect people with the resource, so there’s a time to step back and let the inspiration flow.”

“I don’t think in every stop on every walk I’m gonna try for the inspiration card but when I do play it I want to be very careful with what I'm doing.”

“Recognizing inspiration when it's happening and allowing it to be.”

“...address the part of inspiration that we haven’t really touched on yet which is inspiration that is drawn from spiritual belief, religious belief.”

“There are many windows that you can approach the sublime or the divine through.”

“The call to do something together and the word humanity and both of those are higher level, deeper...they're different than the usual run of the mill interactions that people have.” |
```
| “Feeling connected to other people, connected to myself, connected to the world around me, part of something bigger, that is one larger whole and for me that is a very spiritual concept.”

“Probably just concentrating more on those Tilden-type principles, really trying hard to reveal meanings and being provocative, rather than telling and helping people to connect. I think all of that would lead to greater inspirational moments.”
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Appendix L Virtual World Café Graphic Recordings September, 2014
INSPIRATION IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

Appreciating Inspiration in Interpretation

World Cafe with Jacqui Gilson

MEET AGENCY NEEDS WHILE FOCUS ON INSPIRATION

NEW IDEAS + PATTERNS CHANGE INSPIRATION FOR FUTURE

CONNECTING AGENCY VISITOR MISSION

CREATE AN EXPERIENCE MEMORABLE

WHAT IS INTERPRETATION?

SUSTAINABILITY CURRICULUM

CREATE CHANGE

VIEWED AS "EXTRA" WHAT IS OUR VALUE?

INSPIRE (we) NOT ALWAYS AS BUSINESS

ACTION STEWARDSHIP

ACTION

Satisfaction

Change observed

How to measure WOW

TAKE AWAY POINTS

Keep in touch

Scrbed by

Wanted the fundamentals