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UNIVERSITÄT LÜNEBURG

Understanding Museums as Agents of Social Change – Questions about the Tool of Digitalization



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Lower Saxony – Scotland Joint Forum Workshop**



Die Kunst des Wartens: BIS ZU ELF STUNDEN LANG müssen die Besucher vor der Neuen Nationalgalerie in Berlin ausharren, bis sie eingelassen werden

Are Museums a potential avant-garde of much needed social change?

Would they like to be such an avant-garde in view of the progressing neo-liberalization and McDonaldization of society?

How could they reach out and enlighten a broader audience for this social change?



Museum typology by Merton's (1957) functional types

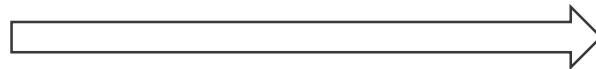
	Accept goals	Reject or ignore goals
Accept means	Conventional museum type	Ritual museum type
Reject or ignore means	Innovative museum type	Rebellious museum type



Eight classes from innovative to rebellious museum type

1. The Responsive museum (Audience Experience = Lang, Reeve & Woolard 2006)
2. The Engaging museum (Audience Experience = Black 2005)
3. The Participatory museum (Participation = Janelli 2012, Simon 2010)
4. The Legitimized museum (Legitimation = Weil 2002)
5. The Community museum (Community = Crooke 2007)
6. The Inclusive Museum (Dismantling Discrimination = Sandell 2004, Kamel et al. 2014)
7. The Formative Museum (Making Culture = Message 2006, Bennett 2013)
8. The Protesting Museum (Identity Formation and Political Action = Message 2014, Zolberg 1996)

Innovative Museum



Rebellious Museum



1. The Responsive Museum

The responsive museum (Lang, Reeve and Woolard 2006)

- Targeted orientation of all museum employees towards the visitors
- Expansion of mutual communication channels
- Problem with poorly trained museum employees or those who are fundamentally hostile to visitors and their mediators
- A high number of visitors is no indicator of the quality of the address
- Community Mapping = recording the type and intensity of existing target groups



2. The Engaging Museum

Not only addressing, but actively encouraging visitors to be involved

- Graham Black (2005) takes the visitors as they are, heterogeneous and random
- The visitor's own commitment must be encouraged,
- first, through PR incentives and marketing campaigns in advance, by word of mouth,
- second, through teaching-learning incentives, through an "attention-getting" of the visitor's consciousness in the museum
- Friendliness, friendly welcome atmosphere and good services, friendly staff,
- Interaction with the exhibits
- Encourages the visitor to deal more intensively and directly with individual exhibits
- Visitor mediation (interpretation) is an art that not every curator masters, but which she/he must learn



3. The Participatory Museum

"Participatory museum" = all stakeholders (public, museum makers, politicians etc.) are given the right to design the museum on an equal footing. Museums should understand participation as the revolutionary potential of their development (Gesser, Handschin, Janelli and Lichtensteiger 2012, Simon 2010)

- The participatory museum becomes a public communication platform for many people through the participation of the visitors
- "Network-Museum" = disruptive museum that interferes with the present and wants to have a political enlightenment effect
- "Agora" = stage and mediator (proxy, constituent) for a complex and heterogeneous community
- "Ecomuseum" = creating an awareness of the population for their own environment and history, as a museography in time and space



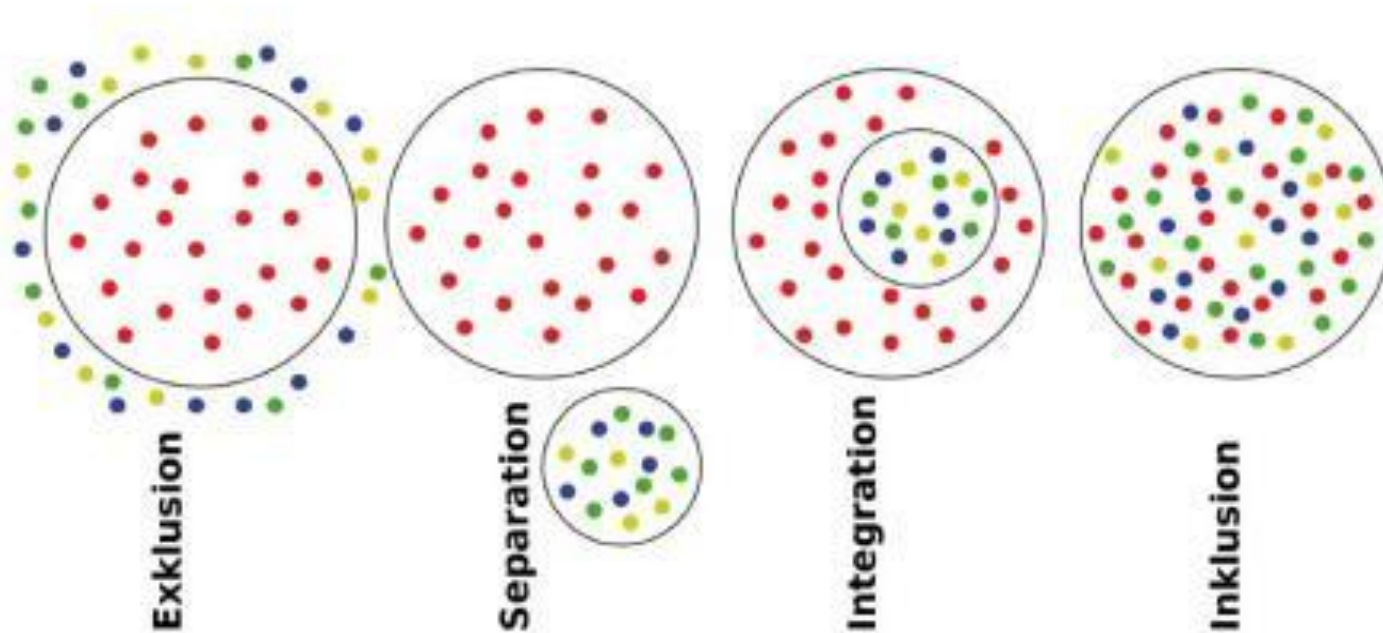
4. The Legitimizing Museum

- Legitimization of a museum depends solely on the close relationship to at least one target group in the population (Weil 2002).
- A museum's right to exist is only established when it assumes social responsibility.
- The specific purposes of the museum for target groups are clearly defined and implemented, they are of general social benefit, of structural benefit and of mediating benefit.
- Museums are not evaluated by their resource efficiency, but by their social necessity.
- The "public service oriented museum" allows the community a say in museum programs.



5. The Community Museum

- There are several forms of community interactions for a community-respecting museum (Crooke 2007),
- construct used to create a collective identity
- Actor in public policy
- Form of social movement





6. The Inclusive Museum

- Equality is the elimination of discrimination of individual population groups (e.g. migration background, gender, disabilities, etc.) through museum work
- Diversity, cultural diversity is based on the perception and approach to groups that are visibly and invisibly different (in terms of cultures, values, education, age, income, professional status)
- Social justice refers to the ways and means by which museums respond to social injustice. The museum should promote a society that strives for the "good life" in the sense of cultural sustainability.
- The general values of equality, diversity, social justice and human rights and esteem must be moved from the margins to the center of everyday museum work and in the museum mission (Sandell 2004, 2012)



7. The Formative Museum

- The society shaping museum refers back to considerations of the museum as a society-controlling institution in the sense of Foucault's principle of governmentality (Bennett 2013)
- According to Message (2006), the "new" museum is a result of a substantial change in thought processes, attitudes and developments, which is closely linked to the rejection of modernism as the most powerful canon of social development
- The discourse of these new museums as avant-garde of social change is primarily concerned with the breaking of traditional power structures and processes
- The role of today's powerful ideologies must be critically reflected and treated in museums (including their own role in this)



8. The Protesting Museum

- The protesting museum is the provocative and deliberately controversial museum (Message 2014, Zolberg 1996)
- The museum must take on the role of protest as critical interference in a defective society
- two types of protest
 - firstly, directly the protest, which directly with the museum as a protesting actor advocates and promotes change
 - secondly, the indirect effect of the museum by providing critical education through exhibitions and other events, thus increasing the potential for protest among the population



Questions w/r to a future empirical exploration

1. In what respect is your museum socially active? Why? Why not? How would you define “socially active”?
2. Do you see yourself as a conformist, innovative, ritual or rebellious museum? Why? Why not?
3. Do you see yourself as a responsive, engaged, participatory, legitimate, community, inclusive, formative or protesting museum? Why? Why not?



Questions w/r to the digitalization of museums

1. In what respect is your museum socially active by using digital tools? Why? Why not?
2. Would using digital tools have an impact on your alignment as a conformist, innovative, ritual or rebellious museum?
3. Would using digital tools have an impact on your alignment as a responsive, engaged, participatory, legitimate, community, inclusive, formative or protesting museum?



Sherry Arnstein's (1969) Ladder of Citizen Participation and the potentially catalyzing role of digitalizing museums

Arnstein's Ladder of Participation

1 Manipulation and 2 Non-Client Centered Therapy

The aim is to cure or educate the participants.

3 Informing A most important first step to legitimate participation. But too frequently the emphasis is on a one way flow of information.

4 Consultation Again a legitimate step - attitude surveys, neighborhood meetings and public enquiries.

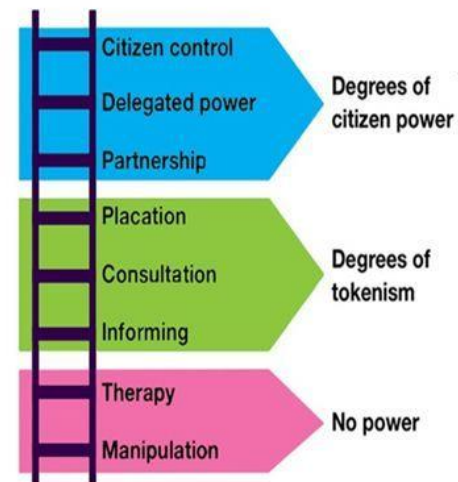
5 Placation It allows citizens to advise or plan ad infinitum but retains for power holders the right to judge the legitimacy or feasibility of the advice.

6 Partnership Power is in fact redistributed through negotiation between citizens and power holders.

7 Delegated power Citizens holding a clear majority of seats on committees with delegated powers to make decisions.

8 Citizen Control Have-nots handle the entire job of planning, policy making and managing decisions, resources, and efforts.

Arnstein's Ladder of Public Participation



Arnstein, Sherry R. "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," JAIP, Vol. 35, No. 4, July 1969, pp. 216-224

<https://www.pinterest.de/pin/427208714651441598/>



museum4punkt0



- How will people explore, learn, and participate in museums in the future — and how can digital technologies support them?
- How can cultural heritage be conveyed digitally? Get an overview of the approaches of museum4punkt0.
- How can museum content be customized to match individual visitors' needs? When do augmented and virtual reality channel knowledge creation? How can museum-based research come alive? And how can digital applications be sustainably maintained, even with a small staff?



museum4punkt0

**German Emigration Center
Bremerhaven**

EXPERIENCE THE HISTORY OF
MIGRATION DIGITALLY

National Museums in Berlin

RETHINKING VISITOR JOURNEYS - THE DIGITAL
ENHANCEMENT OF MUSEUM VISITS

**Stiftung Humboldt Forum
im Berliner Schloss**

HUMBOLDT'S COSMOS IN A DIGITAL SPACE

Senckenberg Museum of Natural History Görlitz

EXPLAINING, UNDERSTANDING,
PARTICIPATING - PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
IN MUSEUM RESEARCH

**Museums of Swabian-Alemannic
Fastnacht**

CARNIVAL - INTANGIBLE
HERITAGE IN DIGITAL
ENVIRONMENTS

**Deutsches Museum - Masterpieces of
Science and Technology**

APPLICATION OF 3D-VISUALIZATION IN
MUSEUM EDUCATION



Understanding Museums as Agents of Social Change – Questions about the Tool of Digitalization – Augmented Reality

Potentials

1. Creating offers for visitors who expect digital mediation
2. Individual addressing technophile (young) visitors
3. Positive effect on learning in museums
4. Visualization of information
5. Activation of visitors by interactive applications
6. Virtual extension of exhibition
7. Analysis of visitors behavior, opinions

Problems

1. not automatically an added value
2. Evoking resistance against VR/AR
3. Distraction from main messages/ contents
4. Impairment of social exchange
5. Blurred lines between VR/AR and reality
6. Extensive and soon outdated technical infrastructure
7. Technical problems, e.g. tracking glitches



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Thank you!

Volker Kirchberg

<https://www.leuphana.de/en/institutes/isco/members/volker-kirchberg.html>