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Diversity, Inclusion, Access, & Equity: An Analysis of Otherness in Cultural Organizations

Cheyanne Jeffries

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Diversity, Inclusion, Access, & Equity: An Analysis of Otherness in Cultural Organizations

Abstract
In an American society that is increasingly more multicultural and diverse every day, diversity in cultural organizations has been the subject of much research dedicated to ensuring our cultural institutions and their boards, employees and overall organizational structure meet the rising demand for inclusion and equity in our nation. The American Alliance of Museums completed a national report in 2017 in which they found that "museum directors and board chairs believe board diversity and inclusion are important to advance their missions, but have failed to prioritize action steps to achieve it", among other key findings that identified a complete lack of diversity as being a top issue within the museum sector. Thus, this paper will begin by analyzing the history of museums and their roles in society, then it will analyze the American Alliance of Museums 2017 National Report to examine the key findings and fully comprehend the issues regarding diversity, inclusion, access and equity within our nations' museums' staff and board. This includes defining what these terms mean in the scope of the research. Next it will present the implications drawn from the report as well as conclusions drawn from other literary work on the topic. This paper will end with a reflection on my experience as a student researcher and how I would like to move forward with this research in future educational and professional endeavors.

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DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, ACCESS, & EQUITY: AN ANALYSIS OF OTHERNESS IN CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

By

Cheyanne Jeffries

A Senior Thesis Submitted to the

Eastern Michigan University

Honors College

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Graduation

with Honors in Arts & Entertainment Management

Approved at Ypsilanti, Michigan, on this date May 9, 2018

Supervising Instructor (Print Name and have signed)

Honors Advisor (Print Name and have signed)

Department Head (Print Name and have signed)

Honors Director (Print Name and have signed)
Thank You

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Abstract

In an American society that is increasingly more multicultural and diverse every day, diversity in cultural organizations has been the subject of much research dedicated to ensuring our cultural institutions and their boards, employees and overall organizational structure meet the rising demand for inclusion and equity in our nation. The American Alliance of Museums completed a national report in 2017 in which they found that "museum directors and board chairs believe board diversity and inclusion are important to advance their missions, but have failed to prioritize action steps to achieve it", among other key findings that identified a complete lack of diversity as being a top issue within the museum sector. Thus, this paper will begin by analyzing the history of museums and their roles in society, then it will analyze the American Alliance of Museums 2017 National Report to examine the key findings and fully comprehend the issues regarding diversity, inclusion, access and equity within our nations' museums' staff and board. This includes defining what these terms mean in the scope of the research. Next it will present the implications drawn from the report as well as conclusions drawn from other literary work on the topic. This paper will end with a reflection on my experience as a student researcher and how I would like to move forward with this research in future educational and professional endeavors.
Introduction

As this paper analyzes the issues regarding diversity, inclusion, access, and equity within our nations' museums' staff and boards I will use the following definitions for diversity, inclusion, access, and equity. These terms will be defined using language from the Racial Equity Tools Glossary, Independent Sector, and Merriam-Webster Dictionary. The definitions to these terms are certainly not meant to be exhaustive as language is an ever evolving, subjective, phenomenon but they are meant to make clear my personal reflection of the meanings behind these words as I define them to enhance our understanding of issues occurring in the museum sector. The definitions are as follows:

- "Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender — the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used — but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values." Source: Racial Equity Tools Glossary

- "Equity is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues
requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.” Source: Independent Sector

- Inclusion: “Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.” Source: Racial Equity Tools Glossary

- Access: “permission, liberty, or ability to enter, approach, or pass to and from a place or to approach or communicate with a person or thing (noun), freedom or ability to obtain or make use of something (noun) Source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online

This paper first, will analyze the history of the museum as an elite, non-diverse institution in society as well as its progression over time. Then I will review a national report done by The American Alliance of Museums in 2017 that discovered an issue in diversity within museums’ staff and boards. Additionally, I will analyze this reports’ implications as well as its impact on policymakers and the museum sector. Finally, I will make recommendations for success based on research as well as reflect on my experience as a student researcher and how I hope to continue this work in the future.

**The Museum as Elite**

Museums have a long history of being involved in education, community building, and social and political commentary while also being recognized as centers of collection, conservation, and exhibition. According to Nicole Ivy, a former museum futurist and now Director of Inclusion for the American Alliance of Museums, “The idea of a museum is a weird animal: there’s a place people go to look at objects other people
had, and there’s a choreography around the museum where we have historically stood silently aback and gaped at old things.” Museums were created to foster “universal education.” (Rodney, 2016) Typically, for much of their existence, museums have been able to experience a kind of “de facto segregation” (Rodney, 2016) that allowed for the bourgeois and their values to shape the way that the public views museums as cultural institutions. In the 17th century, museums in Europe described “collections of curiosities” (“history of museums”) that would collect rare, strange artifacts for the education and entertainment of curious individuals. However, in the 19th and 20th century, that definition shifted to support the new idea that museums were buildings that housed cultural material that the public could access. (“history of museums”). As the public begins to shift and change in dynamic and representation of multiple cultures, the institutions that work to educate and entertain us culturally, including museums, must change along with it.

In an article written by Isaac Kaplan for Artsy, the notion that museums are not isolated spaces is explored. He suggests that artists are creating more socially charged works to address inequalities both racial and socioeconomic and that museums are rethinking their identities to work towards creating a more equitable and diverse world rather than being “walled-off spaces for the wealthy.” The issue of diversity, equity, access and inclusion in museums comes at a pertinent time in our nations’ society in which we begin to criticize the legacy of elitism, that Ivy believes the history of American museums is linked to. (Moffitt, 2017) As the nation becomes more involved with social issues and individual politics, museums must begin to rethink their role in society. James E. Bartlett, executive director of the Museum of Contemporary African
Diasporan Arts notes that museums should challenge how they’ve historically been situated and question their tendency to look backwards and inwards. Museums must begin to look at their history of traditionally acting as spokespeople and start thinking and acting with their communities. (Kaplan, 2016). It is with this thinking in mind that the American Alliance of Museums developed one of their most important findings in their 2017 national report.

**The American Alliance of Museums National Report**

In 2017, the American Alliance of Museums created a national report with the help of BoardSource and Leading With Intent, both nonprofit resources that help to identify how boards in nonprofit organizations are being organized and governed, in which they surveyed 861 museum directors and 841 board chairs with an online survey. Additionally, 715 AAM members responded to the survey out of 4215 emails sent with the link to the survey. The survey was submitted directly to BoardSource to maintain confidentiality. Museum directors had 100 questions about their board policies and practices while the survey for board chairs had 42 questions. The key findings of this report are, in part, what inspired this research.

One of the major key findings was that “Museum directors and board chairs believe board diversity and inclusion are important to advance their missions, but have failed to prioritize action steps to achieve it” (BoardSource, 5) 46 percent of museum boards contain no people of color, yet they all agree that diversity and inclusion are important when it comes to improving the public’s perception of the organization. “Organizations must ensure that we have the right people at the helm to provide vision,
strategy, oversight, and leadership. This requires different and complementary backgrounds and experiences, judgement, engagement, and ongoing attention to how we fill the leadership seats at the table.” (BoardSource, 8) Although various forms of diversity, i.e. age, socioeconomic status, sexuality, etc…. are just as necessary, 64 percent of museum directors are extremely or somewhat dissatisfied with the amount of racial and ethnic diversity in their organizations. (see table 1)

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/ethnicity</th>
<th>Extremely or Somewhat Satisfied</th>
<th>Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Extremely or Somewhat Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse socioeconomic status</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons with a disability</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBTQ</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 2015, another report had already been completed. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation completed a similar kind of study called the Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey that had three components: A spreadsheet that each museum was asked to fill out indicating the demographic categories into which each of its employees fell; a survey
questionnaire targeted at HR directors, which focused on museum diversity programs; and a survey questionnaire targeted at museum directors, which focused on board member diversity and policy issues. This report jump started the collection of data and the focus on the topic of diversity and the underrepresentation of minorities in museum staff and boards. The findings in this report were that 72 percent of the American Alliance of Museum Directors staff was Non-Hispanic White while 28 percent belonged to underrepresented minorities and Non-Hispanic White staff dominated the job positions associated with the educational or intellectual mission of the museum. (see This report also noted that “progress is likely to be swifter and easier on gender equality than on minority representation.” (Schonely, et al. 3) The reasoning is due to the large influx of female staff members since 1995. The report suggest that the nation will need programs to encourage students of color to study in this field so that it diversify.

Table 2

Why Is Diversity Important In These Spaces?

This report along with the American Alliance of Museums report done just last year has inspired organizations, policymakers and even philanthropists to begin to invest in diversity initiatives based on the findings in the reports. However, the “why” is still an ever-present response to the evidence that there is a lack of diversity in our nations’ cultural institutions. So why is diversity important in these spaces?

According to the American Alliance of Museums, “Museum directors understand that the lack of diversity impacts their ability to advance the mission and meet the needs of their members” (BoardSource, 9) Many museums have the words “wide range of audiences”, “diverse audiences”, “gathering place for everyone”, “art for the benefit of all people” and many more that feature language supportive of a broad audience. If your staff and board is not reflective of a broad audience or a diverse community, then you are not advancing your mission and therefore, the organization is not growing or meeting its goals.

The United States is changing every day. Last year the United States Census Bureau reported that the nation’s population is becoming more diverse and in 10-15 years the minority will become the majority. It is critical that institutions began to reflect these changes as they take place. Another huge reason diversity is important, according to a think piece written by Gretchen Jennings and Joanne Jones-Rizzi, is that the organic pursuit of diversity and inclusivity encourages authentic community engagement. (Jennings, et al. 72) It allows for internal changes to be made to effect external input. It also allows for museums to begin to reflect, not only their communities, but society and its pluralism in every aspect.
Why Is There a Lack of Diversity in These Spaces?

Another question that begs response due to the amount of pressing evidence is: why is there a lack of diversity in these spaces to begin with? How did museums get to this point and how is it that, in a world growing more and more diverse each day, museums are missing the mark in diversity, equity, inclusion and access? The American Alliance of Museums believes that the issue lies in the networks that museum leadership typically keep. “Ninety-one percent (91%) of white Americans social networks are other white Americans” (BoardSource, 9) White Americans are the racial group that control most nonprofit leadership staff and board positions. This means that directors and board chairs are not looking outside of their direct contacts to seek out qualified individuals that could offer a different perspective into organizational planning and implementation. This also means that museums are frequently becoming homogenous educational institutions harming the legacy of universal education. If everyone on the staff and board is coming from the same social network, then there is a large market and qualified professional group of people that you are not accessing when making decisions regarding the organization.

According to Nicole Ivy, another reason museums are experiencing a lack of diversity, is due to “unintended bias.” (Kaplan, 2016) Individual bias alone, is a harmful structure by which, if given the opportunity, can shape the nature of an organization given that bias extends into the leaderships’ network. Organizational bias exists as well, however, and has a large impact on the amount of diversity in a cultural institution. It is imperative that we think of hiring on every level as critical. Ivy suggests thinking of ways one can reduce unintended bias in individual hiring processes. She also suggests trusting
the knowledge and expertise of professionals you wouldn’t typically believe have it. 
(Kaplan, 2016) There is a cycle occurring in the art sector in which museums get comfortable in hiring “art professionals” that have degrees in art history and museum studies. However, Tom Finkelpearl, commissioner of New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, suggests identifying your needs as an organization. “If you want community organization... hire community organizers” (Kaplan, 2016) This goes back to the idea that museums should be thinking and acting with their communities instead of for their communities.

Case Studies: Solutions to the Issues

In response to the lack of diversity in museums, organizations, corporate conglomerates and even policymakers are developing initiatives and creating guidelines to improve the amount off diversity in the institutions while also advancing museums’ missions by organizing programs and educational development opportunities to make this a continuous effort. Two cases: The Walton & Ford Family Foundation Diversifying Art Museum Leadership Initiative case and Mayor Bill de Blasio’s, New York “Cultural Plan” case, I believe, are both interesting responses to the issue of little diversity in museums and will make great examples in the effort to analyze the overall topic.

Mayor Bill de Blasio’s, New York “Cultural Plan”

In July 2017, Mayor Bill De Blasio unveiled the first ever “cultural plan” developed for New York’s boroughs. He proposed linking future funding for museums and creative groups in New York to the amount of diversity on their boards and staff. Though he did not disclose any clear set diversity targets that cultural organizations should be reaching for, he believes this announcement is the next step towards a fairer,
more equitable cultural sector that "looks like the city it serves." (Pogrebin, 2017) The report would allocate funding to organizations that submitted "meaningful goals" tied to diversity initiatives (Pogrebin, 2017). In addition, the plan also calls for an increase in funds for individual artists as it was reported that 75 percent of New York artists support themselves from other income and 40 percent are unable to afford art supplies.

Many New York institutions such as The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Carnegie Hall are mostly led by white male executives and this plan is hoping to alleviate the "elitism" that contributes to what Mayor De Blasio believes is the "assumption among many New Yorkers about where they belong and where they don’t belong." (Pogrebin, 2017) An important part of this report is that De Blasio plans to increase funding for less prominent art and creative groups outside of Manhattan. In composing this "cultural plan", Tom Finkelpearl, the commissioner of cultural affairs in New York, brings up the issue of geographical access. "As it becomes more difficult for moderate- and low-income New Yorkers to live near the center, transportation and geographic divides come to the surface." (Pogrebin, 2017)

Overall, this is an important start to an action plan devised to begin the process of diversifying New York’s cultural institutions. However, this "cultural plan" has not been formally approved by the city’s cultural commission, nor has there been any clear-cut specifications detailed in a document. Additionally, this plan comes at a perfect time when Mayor De Blasio is seeking reelection. He also admitted that he doesn’t visit any of the cultural institutions in which he is demanding this change in organizational structure from.
The Walton & Ford Family Foundation

The Walton Family Foundation, founded by Sam and Helen Walton, founders of Wal-Mart and Sam’s Club, was created to provide access to opportunity for people and communities. They have a commitment to the environment, art and education as well as diversity initiatives in education and teacher training programs. The Ford Foundation, founded by Edsel Ford, Henry Ford’s son, has been committed, for 80 years, to innovative ideas, social justice, strengthening democratic values, and reducing poverty while advancing human achievement. Their president, Mr. Darren Walker, has had a long career in social justice and community engagement.

On November 28, 2017, the Walton Family Foundation and Ford Foundation announced that they would be committing $3 million over three years to “support creative solutions to diversify curatorial and management staff at art museums across the United States.” (Ford Foundation, 2017) They draw attention to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation’s report on diversity in 2015 but this initiative, called the Diversifying Art Museum Leadership Initiative, also comes at a prime time directly after the American Alliance of Museums released their national report as well. This initiative will facilitate strategies across the museum sector to promote diversity. Such strategies include hiring professionals from underrepresented groups, offering fellowships to HBCU students and providing career and educational development for diverse professionals in the field. This initiative is being put in place to generate long term solutions.

Darren Walker believes “the arts play an essential role in our society by inspiring people of all ages to dream and to imagine new possibilities for themselves, their
communities, and the world. To ensure the future health and vibrancy of the arts in America, we need more arts leaders who understand and relate to the deeply varied perspectives and life experiences that weave the rich fabric of our nation,” (Ford Foundation, 2017) This initiative has already begun and has pioneered 20 programs in 20 museums across the country.

Reflection and Next Steps

As an arts management student, the past four years of my educational career have been spent analyzing, reviewing, debating and reflecting on policies and practices created in the broader nonprofit sector, the arts sector, and the museum sector. Through all this research and discovery, I have found that I am deeply passionate about more than just managing the arts. It is through the intersection of my race, gender, sexuality and socioeconomic class and my identity as a student, a creator, and a researcher that I have become interested in museums, specifically art museums and creative spaces, developing and facilitating conversations that pertain to the rising need for diversity, inclusion, access, and equity within our cultural sector. Additionally, I have grown to understand my voice in conversations pertaining to diversity, inclusion, access and equity in these spaces and would like to use it to inspire change in the organizational structure by which many museums in our country operate.

I believe a huge part of this discovery, for me, took place within the last year of my educational and professional experience. Last summer, I completed a highly intensive summer internship program in which I interned full time at a cultural heritage museum in
my hometown of Cleveland, OH at the administrative level. This internship was a part of a larger foundation that provided the cohort of interns, placed at various organizations in the city, with professional development opportunities, community building activities, and networking opportunities. During my internship, I was originally tasked with developing community programming around a children’s exhibit. However, my relationships with the staff and board of the organization began to shift and it became painfully evident that before I could do any work with the community externally, I would need to analyze the community identity within the organization.

Being situated as the only person of color within the institution allowed me the opportunity to observe, first hand, the necessity of diversity, inclusion and equity as well as granted me the opportunity to do something about it. My internship outcomes changed completely and my role shifted into developing a diversity training and development initiative for the staff and volunteers. It was in the process of developing that initiative that I began to understand the idea of individual bias influencing internal organizational structure which then influences the way that the community perceives the structure of the institution. I watched as this perception that the community had of the organization shaped the way they thought of the institution and created barriers that prevented effective engagement.

When I returned to school in the fall, I fully committed to learning more about diversity, equity and inclusion within the museum sector and I began to form my research topic for my senior thesis. My original research idea that I believed would have helped me find some answers to many of the questions I was developing was to interview two contemporary art museums with similar community demographics, similar sizes in staff
and board and similar mission statements and purposes. I planned to perform one on one interviews with at least two members of the staff that were involved mostly with program development or community engagement, the director or head curator, and at least one member of the board for both institutions. The list of questions that I planned to ask were as follows:

- If you don’t mind me asking, how old are you?
- If you don’t mind me asking, what ethnic group do you most identify with?
- What is your role within this organization?
  1. How did you find yourself involved professionally with this organization?
  2. How would you say your organization promotes diversity on your staff & board?
  3. Would you say that the community you wish to serve has access to this museum?
     If so, how?
  4. Do you have any initiatives to connect more with the community to see what they would like to see in the museum?
  5. What are the programs this museum has that define access, equity, diversity, and inclusion?
  6. After learning the purpose of this research, is there anything important that you believe I should know or be aware of while pursuing this topic?

As you can see, these questions would have produce a myriad of responses. The first three questions were created to identify the subject as well as provide identity markers about the subject being interviewed. The rest of the questions involve subject matter that seeks to identify the ways in which these two organizations engage with their communities.
After recording the interviews with the subjects at each organization, I planned to transcribe the data and use it to present case studies on each organization based on my findings. Additionally, I was interested in interviewing students from EMU and the University of Michigan that are artists, arts managers and students interested in the creative sector. I also was interested in interviewing professors that had various viewpoints on the matter and smaller arts galleries and creative nonprofits in the Ypsilanti area. The questions for these groups were as follows:

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself and what you do professionally and/or creatively?
2. If you don’t mind me asking, how old are you?
3. If you don’t mind me asking, what ethnic group do you most identify with?
4. Do you feel like most cultural institutions like museums are accessible to a broad range of people both physically and socially?
5. Do you think diversity in cultural organizations like museums is important as it pertains to their staff and boards? Why or why not?
6. After learning the purpose of this research, is there anything you would like to express or share in relation to this topic?

The interviews with these groups were going to be less formal than the interviews with the museums. However, I still wanted to collect demographic information as well as how their identity challenged their experience in cultural organizations regarding diversity.

After transcribing the interviews done with students, professors and other knowledgeable scholars on the matter, I planned to organize all my findings into a thesis. However, this research process was unable to reach completion due to setbacks that
involved time, legalities and, most importantly, comfortability. As I went through the process of reaching out to the organizations and obtaining approvals to research effectively, I experienced hesitation due to the risks that these interviews would involve. I fully understood and anticipated that some of the questions would require answers that could potentially expose a lack of commitment to diversity. With this in mind, I believe that the timeline to make the subjects comfortable was short and so I hope to continue this project on a larger scale in my future educational career. I would like to creatively outline this topic as well and create a multimedia piece of work to accompany my research. In addition, there are a few thoughts I have generated while studying this issue that I hope to explore in later research.

One idea that became important to me while researching the secondary information on this issue, is the “why” of diversity importance. I certainly outlined many reasons why diversity is important but it has always been interesting to me that, in conversations that pertain to importance of diversity or the value in recognizing minorities’ voices, institutional calls for diversity are seemingly often motivated by desires to increase engagement or productivity. While also placing value on community perception, I’ve noticed that organizations mostly call for diversity in direct relation to what it can do for them. It would be interesting to learn in future research if there is any value in calling for diversity initiatives in order to dismantle systems of oppression and systemic racism and sexism.

Another idea that was generated while I’ve been learning about this topic is educational access while planning diversity initiatives. The Walton Family and Ford Foundation are one great example of a philanthropy recognizing the importance of
educational access to connect students to diverse professional experience. I, however, am interested in learning how we can get students starting in junior high and high school, interested and participating in the museum sector. Many students, in my experience, don’t know or understand the role that museums play and the work that those who work in the museum sector do. I believe there would be great value in providing accessible opportunities for youth in the museum sector to start understanding the importance of boards and cultural institutions in our nation.

This is an issue that I would like to make an important part of the artistic and professional work I do. To help improve the museum sector, in my opinion, opens up the possibilities to improving other sectors and encouraging cross sector collaboration in which we begin to empower our creative economy by recognizing the importance of diversity, inclusion, access, and equity.
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Appendix A

PowerPoint Presentation

This PowerPoint presentation was used as part of an oral presentation given at the 38th Eastern Michigan University College of Arts & Sciences Undergraduate Symposium on March 23, 2018.
RESEARCH QUESTION
Is there diversity, equity, inclusion and access within our nations cultural organizations?

Defining Terms

- **Diversity**: The wide variety of shared and different personal and group characteristics among human beings. i.e. race, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, abilities, etc....
- **Equity**: the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.
- **Inclusion**: Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.
- **Access**: freedom or ability to obtain or make use of something (noun)

Racial Equity Tools, Glossary, 2017
American Alliance of Museums
2017 National Report

- Surveyed 861 museum directors & 841 board chairs with an online survey
- Key Findings Included but not limited to:
  - Museum directors and board chairs believe board diversity and inclusion are important to advance their missions, but have failed to prioritize action steps to achieve it
  - 93% of directors in museums & 46% of museum board chairs are all white
  - Only 9% of the core visitors to museums are minorities
  - 77% of museum directors & 66% of board chairs believe expanding racial/ethnic diversity is important
Why is there a lack of diversity, equity, inclusion & access?

- According to the AAM's national report, the impact is due to a networking issue
  - 91% of white Americans' social networks are other white Americans
  - Leaders are not developing relationships with professionals outside of their immediate circle
- According to Nicole Ivy, AAM museum futurist, "Unintended Bias" in hiring processes is another huge issue
  - Connected to both individual bias & organizational bias

Why is diversity important in these spaces?

- According to the report, diversity helps museums to advance their mission
- Allows you to properly reflect and identify the community you serve
- Allows for the evaluation of target audiences & the opportunity to recognize neglected audiences
- In about 10-15 years, the US Census Bureau reports that the majority will become the minority & we should begin to reflect our nation as it evolves
Discussion

Mayor Bill De Blasio’s "Cultural Plan".

- Link future funding of museums & arts groups to diversity of staff and boards.
- Requires the submission of "meaningful goals".
- Elitism

Images taken from The New York Times article
The Walton Family & Ford Foundation:

Diversifying Art Museum Leadership Initiative

- Offers fellowships, mentorships and professional development opportunities.
- 20 museum participants including:
  - Cleveland Museum of Art
  - The Art Institute of Chicago
  - Andy Warhol Museum

"THE ARTS PLAY AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN OUR SOCIETY BY INSPIRING PEOPLE OF ALL AGES TO DREAM AND TO IMAGINE NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR THEMSELVES, THEIR COMMUNITIES, AND THE WORLD. TO ENSURE THE FUTURE HEALTH AND VIBRANCY OF THE ARTS IN AMERICA, WE NEED MORE ARTS LEADERS WHO UNDERSTAND AND RELATE TO THE DEEPLY VARIED PERSPECTIVES AND LIFE EXPERIENCES THAT WEAVE THE RICH FABRIC OF OUR NATION."

- DARRENN WALKER, PRESIDENT OF FORD FOUNDATION
Next Steps

- We have to advocate for diversity & inclusion
- Continuing this work in the future by interviewing individual arts institutions
- Identifying community needs
- Changing individually & internally before changing externally
- Potential to expand past the museum sector

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Thank You!