

# Local Community Influences on Interpretation at Historical Sites and Museums

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LOCAL COMMUNITY INFLUENCES ON INTERPRETATION AT  
HISTORICAL SITES AND MUSEUMS

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts  
in the Department of History  
in the College of Arts and Humanities  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida

Spring Term  
2019

Major Professor: Caroline Cheong

## **ABSTRACT**

“Local Community Influences on Interpretation at Historical Sites and Museums” is an analysis in how interpretations of historical content are chosen for visitors and to what degree local communities contribute to this decision process. What determines which stories and historical narratives are presented at historical sites and museums? Is the process of determining how to interpret historical events as simple as relating the event to the time and place that corresponds with that particular site? Is it possible that public historical sites and museums reflect the social values and points of interests of the local communities rather than accepted and popular history of American culture? This analysis demonstrates how local communities affect the interpretation through three case studies and through three components – governance, stakeholders, and funding. The simplified version of presenting history at historical sites “because it happened here” no longer becomes viable. Interpretation is affected and these three components demonstrate to what degree local communities contribute.

*Dedicated to the memory of Dennis C. FitzGerald. Thank you for your guidance and love. You are forever in my heart and mind.*

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

Local communities play an essential and significant role in determining how the history of a site is represented through interpretation and therefore, how audiences perceive the past. Many historical events are associated with each site; however, only a select few of the stories are presented to the public through educational programs, exhibits, and ceremonial events. What determines which stories and historical narratives are presented at historical sites and museums? Is the process of determining how to interpret historical events as simple as relating the event to the time and place that corresponds with that particular site? Is it possible that public historical sites and museums reflect the social values and points of interests of the local communities rather than accepted and popular history of American culture?

I will demonstrate in this thesis how local communities can influence a site's interpretation through three case studies that will be structured around three key components – governance, stakeholders, and funding. The first is an analysis of the Castillo de San Marcos located in Saint Augustine, Florida, considered to be the oldest established city in the United States and reliant on the tourism industry. The second is an examination of Fort Monroe, Virginia and the Casemate Museum located within Fort Monroe. The community surrounding Fort Monroe is Hampton, Virginia, one of the seven cities that make up the Hampton Roads area of Tidewater Virginia. The final case study is the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center and Museum located on Merritt Island, Florida. The Veterans Memorial Center is located between Cocoa Village and the Space Coast and likewise, relies heavily on the tourism industry as well as local community

participation. Each site is unique and rooted in its military background and connections and represented through their narratives as such.

There are three key themes that emerge when these case studies are analyzed. The first is that local communities do not equally influence each site. The larger and more governmental support a site receives, the less they depend on community influence. The second is that there are many mitigating components that help to influence interpretation in these sites. The third is that changes in interpretations coincide with the development of cultural history and changes in social dynamics. Though these key themes are affected in different ways, local communities influence interpretation in each site.

Before considering the three case studies, one needs to examine what is meant by the term interpretation within this study. Many authors, academics, and professional public historians have their own understandings of what interpretation is. Perhaps the best way to describe the term interpretation, as it relates to preservation or public history, are the narratives a site or museum chooses to represent an event or place for the public to better understand the themes, historical significance, or importance of what transpired at the site being visited. One of the questions outlined at the beginning of this introduction is how sites choose what stories are depicted. If the goal of a historic site is to provide an audience with a better understanding of historical events, interpretation is the vehicle through which the audience arrives at that destination. Interpretative techniques, which will be explored further in this study, can be effective, ineffective, and perhaps somewhere in between. The three case studies provide a glimpse into these successes or lack thereof when comparing each site with the principles of public history



and to the degree to which a site's interpretation transmits the past as it relates to the present.

The past can be a tricky topic when considering the many different ways an individual chooses to use the word as it relates to their own personal preference. The terms "event" and "place" also can be misleading when discussing the past. Public historical site managers should conceivably have a grasp on these terms as it relates to their own sites and techniques in order to create a successful interpretation for their audiences. Through these case studies, site managers will understand how local communities can affect interpretative themes.

The "Past" is simply that - what has transpired before the present. Each past is different though and holds meaning for every single individual who visits any type of historical sites. This study will also examine how these pasts are interpreted and how they intend to connect with audiences. The term "intend" is used because as will be discussed, not every interpretation is successful.

The term "Event" refers to any action of historical significance that these sites choose to use in the transmission of the past that may connect to a larger meaning and to American culture. How do some events receive recognition and others are forgotten or not emphasized equally as others? On the Virginia Peninsula two battles were fought in the area between the York and James Rivers - in 1781 the British Army under Lord Cornwallis surrendered to General George Washington at a small waterfront village known as Yorktown; in 1862, another battle was fought in the vicinity during the American Civil War. Each battle represents an event of historical significance but only one receives extensive attention. Similarly, in the City of Williamsburg, Virginia, a small

Civil War battle was fought in 1862 yet the theme used to represent the city is a colonial representation prior to and during the American Revolutionary War. Though the theme of Colonial Williamsburg may not represent one specific event, it is within the context of a colonial ambience that many events are interpreted for the audiences rather than the Civil War battle that was fought there in 1862. This analysis assesses management's interpretive process in choosing which narrative to present to the public.

The last term that needs to be explained is "Place." The word place can mean a variety of things depending on the context in which it is used. Place not only represents a physical or geographical area but a timeframe in the past. Both terms will be used to examine the circumstances surrounding the interpretation used at each site discussed. Historiography assists in the study of the past by tracking how a certain historical theme has altered or changed through perspectives from a scholar and perhaps society as a whole. Historians and scholars help to uncover new evidence as well as different perspectives as time progresses. Some historiographies shift only slightly in the way a theme is presented and some shift dramatically depending on the methodologies used by the academic and how willing society accepts the evidence produced. Place becomes an extremely important part of these case studies and how each sites' historiography has changed or shifted. The interpretations used to illustrate the narratives of each site can be tracked by the historiographies and the era in which certain interpretations were more prevalent than others. Many of the interpretations presented to audiences today would not have been widely accepted in the past.

## **Interpretation and Public History**

The term “interpretation” usually denotes a translation from one language to another but in the case of public history; an altered definition is often used. For this analysis, interpretation means the representation of past events and places for audiences to understand the greater significance of an event or place within a larger narrative. Interpretation also varies from site to site according to what history is being represented at each specific site. An example of what history is being represented is if a site focuses on military aspects, social aspects, or political aspects. Understanding the principles of interpretation is a key task for public historians to master in order to successfully represent their site.

Freeman Tilden is among one of the most recognizable figures when discussing interpretation and an important part of the National Park Service.<sup>1</sup> His six principles have become the standard in which National Parks, as well as other historical sites, have established their own philosophies for presenting historical material to the public.<sup>2</sup> He defines interpretation as, “An educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.”<sup>3</sup> Sam Ham, who has become another pioneer in interpretation, uses a much simpler definition. He states that interpretation is “an approach to communication” for “pleasure seeking audiences in such places as museums, parks, historic sites, zoos, aquariums, and botanical gardens...and just about any place visitors go to have a good time and possibly learn

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<sup>1</sup> Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 1-199.

<sup>2</sup> Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 34-35.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid* 33.

something interesting.”<sup>4</sup> Marc Blackburn concisely sums up the term interpretation in his own work *Interpreting American Military History at Museums and Historic Sites*. Tilden and Ham certainly influenced Blackburn based off of their contributions mentioned in his book. Blackburn describes interpretation as “facilitating a connection between the resources that we are charged to protect and the interests of the audiences who visit the places where we work.”<sup>5</sup> There are key elements in all of these definitions that reflect two components. They are education and visitors.

One can assume then that the role of public historical sites exists to educate the public. But in what ways does this education take form at these historical sites? Maybe the easiest way to explain the different forms of education at historical sites is to explain what is the intended purpose of interpretation. Tilden’s first, and arguably the most important, principle states, “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.”<sup>6</sup> Tilden does not give exact diagrams regarding how to present the information to the visitor but rather gives an end-state goal. His own book *Interpreting Our Heritage* is filled with many of his own personal examples and what he has observed from other public historians.<sup>7</sup> The intended goal or objective is to make the information thought provoking for the visitor as well as enabling the visitor to draw his or her own conclusions about the information being presented.<sup>8</sup> Tilden’s explanation asks for

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<sup>4</sup> Sam Ham, *Interpretation: Making a Difference on Purpose* (Golden: Fulcrum Publishing, 2013), 1.

<sup>5</sup> Marc Blackburn, *Interpreting American Military History at Museums and Historic Sites* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 1.

<sup>6</sup> Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 18.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid* 1-199.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid* 41, 59-67.

provocation, enabling the visitor to place the context being consumed into a way that they can understand it and perhaps relate the material to their own lives.

Another prominent individual referred to when composing this analysis is David Larsen. Larsen's own description for interpretation is that it "does not tell people how it is, it reveals personal significance."<sup>9</sup> Larsen also states that interpretation "helps the audiences think and feel differently. It does not provide answers, it poses questions. It does not teach, it offers opportunities. Interpretation does not educate, it provokes increasingly sophisticated appreciation, understanding, and more generous perspective toward the multiple meanings of a given place."<sup>10</sup> Larsen's analogy of a scientific equation succinctly breaks down the term interpretation and the intended goal of interpretation:

$$(KR+KA) AT=IO$$

*(Knowledge of the Resource + Knowledge of the Audience) Appropriate Technique = Interpretive Opportunity*

Essentially, you cannot have one without the other for a successful interpretation to take place.

Knowing the principles behind interpretation allows for public historians to relate any subject matter to an event and place as long as there is a willing audience. Blackburn further explains that the experience of visiting a site and applying what is being interpreted into an idea for consideration is "ultimately in the hands of the audience to connect their own interests to your institution."<sup>11</sup> The visitor is the intended audience for

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<sup>9</sup> Blackburn, *Interpreting American Military History*, 4-5; David Larsen, *Meaningful Interpretation* (Eastern National: Fort Washington, 2011), 215-224.

<sup>10</sup> Larsen, *Meaningful Interpretation*, 49.

<sup>11</sup> Blackburn, *Interpreting American Military History*, 7.

public historical sites when discussing interpretation and, although probably the most obvious when considering the role of historical sites, the one element which can never be overlooked. There would be no need for a public historian to interpret events and places if there was no audience to receive the information.

Paul Connerton also helps to analyze the interpretation of historical events and places through the study of memory in his book *How Societies Remember*. He states:

Concerning memory as such, we may note that our experience of the present very largely depends upon our knowledge of the past. We experience our present world in a context which is casually connected with our past events and objects, and hence with a reference to events and objects which we are not experiencing when we are experiencing the present.<sup>12</sup>

When individuals visit a historical site, they are visiting that site in the present trying to relate events that happened decades if not centuries ago and with cultural materials that are associated with that same era. Furthermore, those visitors are experiencing current events that may or may not directly relate to these sites and therefore, potentially create a greater disconnection.

Public historical sites exist because there is a vested interest from either society or through the government that represents that society. Denise Meringolo refers to a former professor from the University of California, Santa Barbara, Robert Kelley, in her book *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks: Toward a New Genealogy of Public History*, "Public History refers to the employment of historians and historical method outside of academia."<sup>13</sup> Meringolo further adds that public history also refers to "the practice of

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<sup>12</sup> Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 2.

<sup>13</sup> Denise Meringolo, *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks: Toward a New genealogy of Public History* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012), xvii.

history for public consumption.”<sup>14</sup> Understanding the term public history aids in understanding interpreting at historical sites. Public history, regardless of typology, is for visitors. One key element for successful interpretations depends on the ability to connect past events and places to an audience in a relatable and thought-provoking manner.

### **Connecting the Public to the Past**

Tilden states that when referring to the centenary of the American Civil War, “it becomes increasingly clear that the visitor’s interest is not much in the military details, but in the great human story.”<sup>15</sup> He further uses a quote from a prominent historian, Jacques Barzun, “The use of History is not external but internal. Not what you can do with history, but what history does to you, is its use.”<sup>16</sup> In order for the public historian to share a past event or connect a visitor with a place, the narratives will best be understood if it is communicated to that individual in a relatable manner. It also becomes the job of the public historian to demonstrate how those events or places affect visitors. The task at hand may be easier than one would believe or hope due to the nature of public history itself. Meringolo further explains that public history is a collaborative effort.<sup>17</sup>

Whether they work as consultants or in museums or federal agencies, public historians conduct research and develop interpretations in concert with a variety of audiences and stakeholders. Although public historians share a commitment to the best practices of historical scholarship, they are more likely than university-focused scholars to value collaborative inquiry over independent scholarship; they facilitate conversations that allow the interests and needs of diverse partners to shape the questions that will guide their research.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Meringolo, *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks*, xiv.

<sup>15</sup> Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 50.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid* 50.

<sup>17</sup> Meringolo, *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks*, xxiv.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid* xxiv.

Public historians' role brings them into contact with wide and varying types of audiences enabling them to develop techniques to best interpret the past to visitors. These types of interactions assist the public historian to better understand what types of educational goals an audience desires and therefore, they can tailor their interpretive decisions to meet the needs of audiences. There is a pitfall to this approach however. There must be a mutual collaboration and a balancing act between public historians, stakeholders, and audiences in order for the historical representations to be presented successfully and ethically. If one side influences the intended context too heavily, a disproportionate interpretation will be the result and a disconnection between scholarly techniques and the subject matter will exist.

Another important consideration Meringolo states is that "Although popular histories are often false or misleading, they do speak to communal values and beliefs, and public historians tend to engage these beliefs respectfully rather than dismissing them out of hand."<sup>19</sup> One of the many ongoing debates between public history, academic history, and general audiences is that occasionally, historical sites and museums give the impression that they have been rewritten or revised the past for a more politically correct presentation or agenda. It then becomes the task of the public historian to reexamine the information that differs from popular history through new information, most often created by new evidence and new perspectives. The public historian then has the opportunity to expand on these collaborations when these circumstances exist in order to present a fuller or more well-rounded interpretation. Meringolo further elaborates, "Public historians share authority not only with their audiences and employers but also with colleagues

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid xxiv.



from a variety of disciplines.”<sup>20</sup> This mutual sharing of authority brings together different approaches in interpreting any historical site. Whether it is through archaeology, anthropology, or sociology, new perspectives emerge in understanding our collective past. These new perspectives emphasize different qualities to consider when interpreting the past for a site causing further reflection into how that site spatially connects with a regional or national narrative. These new perspectives also accentuate different social values attributed to one’s own heritage or culture. Groups who initially have no interest in a particular site can potentially see other value in the site through different fields of study. These techniques can increase the range of interested parties or stakeholders as well as the range of audiences who visit these sites. All of which can lead to a well-publicized tourist destination and assist with the site gaining positive exposure. The fundamental objective for the public historian is to relate the subject matter to the audience.

David Allison approaches the techniques used in connecting the past to the public in many ways with two being the focus of this analysis. The first is through the use of “costumed first-person characterizations.”<sup>21</sup> This technique performs in many ways but the two that stand at the forefront are visualization and tangible interactions. When audiences visit historical sites, costumed individuals can assist in making a “meaningful connection to the past.”<sup>22</sup> Two out of the three case studies incorporate volunteers who wear costumes in order to assist in relating the narratives to the audiences. Visualizations are combined with verbal communication in order to interpret past events and places.

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<sup>20</sup> Meringolo, *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks*, xxiv.

<sup>21</sup> David Allison, *Living History: Effective Costumed Interpretation and Enactment at Museums and Historic Sites* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), ix.

<sup>22</sup> Allison, *Living History*, ix.

Visual cues help to illustrate a forgotten past through the assistance of the human senses. A past event or place is not easily forgotten if there are visual cues established that help connect the public to the narratives.

Exhibits and displays found in museums likewise assist in this technique as well as monuments, gravestones, and other notable markers. However, one challenge in only using these types of visual displays is that they cannot interact with the visitor through a conversation. In contrast, the costumed individual provides a visual cue for visitors to gravitate towards as well as providing a tangible piece of evidence that audiences can interact with through conversation, creating the opportunity for a successful interpretation. It is easier to explain pieces of the uniforms they are wearing or explain the firing mechanisms of the weapons they are holding as a costumed individual. These items can be viewed behind a glass display case but what is lacking is a combined visual and verbal connection that helps facilitate the interpretation. Allison further explains, “The human connections that are formed in the conversations between guests and an interpreter are timelessly effective.”<sup>23</sup> Visitors can possibly place themselves in the shoes of those individuals who lived many years ago through the interactions they have with costumed interpreters.

A second theme Allison describes focuses on the entertainment value of historical sites and museums with the goal of education taken into consideration.<sup>24</sup> Margot Wallace further explores the goals of educational interpretation in her book *Writing for Museums*. She uses verbs to help uncover how learning objectives can be reached such as “Relate,

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<sup>23</sup> Allison, *Living History*, ix.

<sup>24</sup> Allison, *Living History*, ix.

Discover, Solve, and Reconstruct.”<sup>25</sup> By using these types of words, she states “Even thinking in terms of action verbs like these, new ideas flow.”<sup>26</sup> The job of public historians is successfully interpreting the information associated with their site through an educational experience. Meringolo further elaborates on the role of public historians by breaking it down into “four crucial components: historical precedent, practitioner skills, collaborative practice, and intellectual value.”<sup>27</sup> All terms are relevant and connect with the other authors examined in this study but one directly corresponds with Allison’s and Wallace’s goal of education - intellectual value. Historical sites all have a goal to represent their own narratives through many different techniques with education as one of its most if not the most important goal for the public. What value would a site’s interpretation have without an educational goal? There are many other values associated with sites such as memorialization or remembrance but all filter into education. One chooses to retain certain concepts and practices as learning experiences and though memorialization helps the public to remember certain aspects of history, all serve a purpose in connecting that individual to a larger narrative or meaning. Some may refer to this connection as heritage or culture. Whatever the term used, educational goals should be used when reflecting historical ideas and concepts.

One of the key portions of this second theme that Allison uses is “entertainment.” Wallace concurs stating “ ‘Learning outcomes’ run the risk of sounding mandatory and boring.”<sup>28</sup> Educational goals presented in a fashion that most individuals enjoy help the individual to retain the objectives of historical sites. But to what extent do historical sites

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<sup>25</sup> Margot Wallace, *Writing for Museums* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 50.

<sup>26</sup> Wallace, *Writing for Museums*, 50.

<sup>27</sup> Meringolo, *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks*, xxvi.

<sup>28</sup> Wallace, *Writing for Museums*, 50.

need to present the narratives in an entertaining way without becoming a commercialized amusement park? That question is further evaluated in this study through the three case studies and how each site responds in keeping audiences entertained, interpreting their narratives, and retaining academic integrity.

### **Methodology**

Examining three historical sites with varying backgrounds complicates a direct comparison due to the nature and history interpreted at each site. Therefore, three broad components will help in the analysis process for each case study. The first will take an in-depth look into how each site is operated through management or governance and whichever overarching component assists in the site's programs and day-to-day operations. One of the key points of this component will be an examination of their educational programs and how each site chooses which interpretation to communicate to the public. A second component that is examined is the stakeholders involved with the sites. The term stakeholder can mean a multiple of things much like some of the other terms used in this study such as event and place. For the purpose of this study, the term stakeholders will incorporate:

- Non-Profit organizations / Heritage groups or clubs
- Individuals who dedicate their time for the historical site as volunteers or through donations
- Board of Directors and Foundations; and
- Local educational institutions and their employees

The scope of this analysis could potentially uncover other mitigating factors but for general considerations, these four groups are the focus of this study. The third and final component will be funding considerations. As many understand, financial support is necessary for any historical site to exist and remain successful. The first two components

are unquestionably affected by the third but a separate reflection for the third is incorporated because of its importance, as the reader will soon discover. Through these components, each case study is examined on its own merits while a fourth chapter compares and contrasts the case studies in order to gage each site's successes or failures based on their own circumstances.

A third party was used as a non-biased advisor in order to help guide this analysis and what trends exist in the public history field. Mr. Todd Ballance is currently the Executive Director at Historic Saint Luke's located in Smithfield, Virginia, the oldest church located in the state.<sup>29</sup> He is also the Vice President for the Isle of Wight County Historic Society, Treasurer for the Board of Directors for Historic Smithfield Inc., and an independent museum consultant. Ballance has been in the public history field since 1994 and has worked as an educator for many different venues to include the Virginia War Museum, Colonial Williamsburg, and Bacon's Castle.

His opinion in discussing what public history is as a field of study as well as what his definition of interpretation is correlates with many of the pioneers in the field. He states that the role of the public historian should be "to provoke" the minds of the audiences.<sup>30</sup> His use of "provoke" implies an engaging mechanism to assist in the interpretation to not only "take the data and interpret for the masses" but to connect the information being communicated through "academic integrity" and "enjoyment."<sup>31</sup> These

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<sup>29</sup>An interview was conducted with Mr. Todd Ballance on May 18, 2018 at St. Luke's in Smithfield, Virginia 28 miles from where I was raised. Todd has been a personal friend for many years beginning in the early 1990s and his invaluable contributions to this study is greatly appreciated. His successful pursuit as a professional and academic in the public history field is one of the many reasons why I persevere to continue with my own goals.

<sup>30</sup> ibid

<sup>31</sup> ibid

topics ultimately translate in educational programs as well as site stewardship. Ballance spoke at length of the responsibility for the site to build relationships with the community as well as the role of stakeholders. Ballance further explains that everyone who visits a public historical site become stakeholders and can become “emotionally invested to a varying degree.”<sup>32</sup> This emotional investment translates into “financial commitment” and therefore, visitors become “the most valuable commodity.”<sup>33</sup> Interest in the site’s heritage and narratives represented through the staff, volunteers, visitors, and programs will instill a vested interest in order to keep any historical site funded as a positive cultural influencer for the local community.

This thesis examines each case study in order to understand why certain narratives are chosen over others and how those narratives are interpreted for the public. The three components outlined in the methodology (governance, stakeholders, and funding) are the three major factors used in these case studies because they hold the most significance. The simplified version of presenting history at historical sites “because it happened here” no longer becomes viable. The profession of public history must take into account the local community influence when representing past events. Interpretation is affected and these three components demonstrate to what degree local communities contribute.

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<sup>32</sup> ibid

<sup>33</sup> ibid

## CHAPTER TWO: SAINT AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA AND THE CASTILLO DE SAN MARCOS

With the fall of Granada, Europe and the rest of the world experienced something that would change humankind forever with the rediscovery of the Americas by Europe and Christopher Columbus. Thousands would follow in Columbus' footsteps and bring with them a tradition well rooted in European practice as in other parts of the world, the concept of borderlands and frontiers. These voyages spurred the Age of Discovery and their achievements only led to further exploitations and cultural exchanges with the native populations. Precious metals were found in what is now Mexico and South America leading to an attempted Spanish hegemony around the Caribbean ocean and throughout both continents. The continued Spanish presence in the Americas led to a constant pressure for subjugating the native populations and to impart their own culture on to those same populations. With the successful and prosperous expeditions in New Spain, the same goals and desires occupied the Spanish crown and further excursions into other areas. This area was the southeastern peninsula of North America named by Ponce de Leon as Pascua Florida or by today's singular term, Florida.<sup>34</sup>

This analysis examines the local community influences on interpretation for the Castillo de San Marcos, the Spanish fortification constructed in the 1600s and the historic section of Saint Augustine. The fort itself is quite remarkable and dominates the water entrance leading into Saint Augustine. It is constructed with a local building material

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<sup>34</sup> David Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press 2009), 29. Pascua Florida was the term Ponce de Leon coined when he first set foot on the Florida coast on Easter Day March 1513. There are many phrases used to describe the translation of Pascua Florida, all surrounding flowers. Such translations usually stem from the types of celebrations associated with Easter day and the use of flowers in the Catholic faith.

known as coquina, a rock made up of seashells and limestone, creating very sturdy and durable walls. The city is located in the North Eastern Corner of Florida and carries with it the title of the oldest established European city in the United States. Saint Augustine was founded in 1565 by Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, and was a military stronghold on an expanding Spanish frontier. The Spanish were already experiencing encroachments from other European nations such as the construction of Fort Caroline by the French.<sup>35</sup> It was necessary for Spain to establish a strong military presence through the creation of a Spanish city on the American continent, not only to support military expeditions into Florida but as a buffer between future European attempts in conquering North America.

A continued Spanish presence in Florida was necessary to prevent further advances from other European powers. The French, English, Dutch, and Portuguese likewise had ideas in exploiting the resources both continents had to offer. The only way to retain control of an area was through a military presence. René Laudonnière, a French adventurer, states that “having measured out a piece of a triangle, we went to work, some to dig on all sides, others to cut faggots, and others to raise and give form to the rampart” when speaking of the construction of Fort Caroline.<sup>36</sup> The fort was located near the mouth of the Saint Johns River in present day Jacksonville and within striking distance to Spanish shipping channels.<sup>37</sup> In a letter to King Phillip II (Spain’s ruler in 1565), Menéndez states:

I feel sure the design of those who should settle in Florida is to dominate over those islands, and stop the navigation with the Indi[e]s, which they can easily do

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<sup>35</sup> *ibid*, 28.

<sup>36</sup> René Laudonnière, *Three Voyages*, trans. Charles Bennett (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2001), 70.

<sup>37</sup> Eugene Lyon, *The Enterprise of Florida: Pedro Menendez de Aviles and the Spanish Conquest of 1565-1568*, (Gainesville: The University Presses of Florida, 1974), 35-36.



by settling in said Florida...it seems to him it would be to the service of God Our Lord and your majesty for the general good of your Kingdoms the Indies it would be well for you majesty to try and domineer over these lands and coasts, which on account of their positions, if other nations should go on settling and making friends with the Indians, it would be difficult to conquer them, especially if settled by French and English Lutherans.<sup>38</sup>

The Spanish now faced two problems. The first was how to pacify the natives and second, how to deal with foreign European powers beginning new colonies.

Fort Caroline was situated very close to Saint Augustine and threatened commercial traffic leaving the Americas back to Europe lading with treasure. King Phillip charged Menéndez, upon hearing news of potential French invasions against Florida, to destroy the established French colony. “And that you may do everything to defend yourselves and capture the Forts they have built and thrust them from the land...and give no quarters to the enemy to take root in them.”<sup>39</sup> Spanish control in Florida became necessary for the control of their empire in the Western Hemisphere.

His focus on making friends with the native populations in order to build a relationship or alliance against other European powers also explains the unique cultures established in Florida and Saint Augustine with a Spanish influence. Menéndez became well aware of their capabilities and how powerful it would be for the Native Americans to assist the Spanish.

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<sup>38</sup> Pedro Menéndez, “To His Catholic Royal Majesty Pedro Menendez Says,” in *The Unwritten History of Old St. Augustine, Copied from the Spanish Archives in Seville, Spain*, ed. A.M. Brooks (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Library, 2005): 5-10

<sup>39</sup> King Phillip II, “To Gen. Pedro Menéndez de Aviles, knights of the Order of Santiago, and our Governor of the Province of Florida,” in *The Unwritten History of Old St. Augustine, Copied from the Spanish Archives in Seville, Spain*, ed. A.M. Brooks (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Library, 2005): 10-12.

Menéndez established Saint Augustine before his campaign against the French began with the help of local Indians and 500 soldiers and 300 settlers.<sup>40</sup> “And thus was Saint Augustine founded, with pomp and proclamation, solemnity and promise of fidelity, amid the martial sounds or music and artillery.”<sup>41</sup> A frontier city was finally established to combat French invaders and to act as a fortified position from which expeditions could be launched into the borderlands and frontiers either against European forces or unfriendly native populations. Menéndez would soon come to destroy the French colony at Fort Caroline killing 132 out of the 240 garrisoned there and established a precedence of continued conflict for many more centuries against the native populations who would not submit to Spanish authority and the rest of Europe.<sup>42</sup>

The military conquests of a few men helped determine the course of the conquest of Florida through royal approval. Prolonged and continued conflicts that once occurred on the Iberian Peninsula were now transplanted onto the American continents. With these exploits came experience and through the actions of gaining a foothold and establishing an ever-lasting presence through fortified cities, America became the new battleground for European conflict. Saint Augustine, one of many frontier cities to come, became the model for how the settlement of Florida would transpire and act as a reflection of past experiences in Spain. Military engagements and campaigns were only one aspect of many things to come when conquering the land and its inhabitants. Once the land was quelled enough to build a stronger presence, other mitigating factors in controlling the native populations were not far behind.

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<sup>40</sup> Manucy, *Menendez*, 34.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid*, 36.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid*, 40-41.

Religion also had a monumental lasting effect in Colonial Florida. The missions and friars likewise helped in establishing the borderlands and frontiers. These missions played a crucial role in establishing a separation from both Christian and non-Christian native populations as well as a visible separation between the northern fringes of a Colonial Spanish Empire from the rest of the world. Another important aspect of Northern Florida was the diverse nature of its inhabitants. Alan Galloway states that “Frontier-city exchange among settlers, Indians, and slaves on the periphery began as a necessary means of survival....”<sup>43</sup> These cultural exchanges occurred through the mixing of races, trade between the many groups who made up the Florida frontier, and the sharing of beliefs customs and cultural practices. Saint Augustine was at the heart of all the contributing factors that now help represent the city as the oldest permanent European settlement in the United States and their interpretation today.

My approach to this analysis began as a study of the fortification known as Castillo de San Marcos and nothing more. However, the more I began to examine the fortification operated by the National Park Service, I began to realize that this analysis would have to explore more contributing factors. Located across from Castillo de San Marcos lays the historic district of Saint Augustine. The surrounding buildings and themes located within the historic district reflect Spanish influence. From restaurants, trinket shops, and separate house tours; all contribute to the overall ambiance of a Spanish settlement. The National Cemetery located on the southern edge of the historic district likewise helps to contribute to the overall Spanish influence.<sup>44</sup> The cemetery is

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 44.

<sup>44</sup> During my time as a graduate student with the University of Central Florida, my Introduction to Public History class participated with the Veterans Legacy Program (VLP). The VLP works in conjunction with

located next to Saint Francis barracks, a site once garrisoned by Spanish troops. The burials, however, reflect veterans throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with a great emphasis on the Seminole Indian Wars. A further analysis into that specific point will be examined later in this chapter. Each component could likely stand on its own without the influence of the Castillo de San Marcos, however, when viewing them collectively, the study takes on a more inclusive study and multi-faceted examination.

### **Governance**

The first component of the study aims at analyzing the concept of governance. The fact that the location has been established the longest as a protected historical site out of the three case studies helps in understanding how the site continues to operate today. The most important document in understanding what guidelines the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument operates under is located in the foundation document revised in 2016.<sup>45</sup> This document outlines the park's mission statement, purpose, history, and most importantly the goals that the park wishes to accomplish.<sup>46</sup>

As to the question why is a Spanish interpretation more prevalent, we must look into the circumstances in which the park was established. In May 1940, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes wrote a letter to the Chairman for the Committee on the Public Lands, the Honorable Rene DeRouen House of Representatives.<sup>47</sup> It states that the park once known as Fort Marion National Monument should be changed to the more

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the Veterans Administration's National Cemeteries in order to help emphasize the veterans who are buried in these cemeteries.

<sup>45</sup> National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, *Foundation Document: Castillo de San Marcos National Monument*, June 2016.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid*

<sup>47</sup> *ibid* 33

appropriate Castillo de San Marcos “primarily because of its vital association for 150 years with the Spanish History of Florida.”<sup>48</sup> In June 1942 Public Law 577 was approved stating:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the area now within the Fort Marion National Monument in the State of Florida, shall hereafter be known as the “Castillo de San Marcos National Monument”, under which name the aforesaid national monument shall be entitled to receive and to use all moneys heretofore or hereafter appropriated for the Fort Marion National Monument.<sup>49</sup>

The site now consists of twenty acres within the city of Saint Augustine along with several other land parcels along the seawall, the city’s central plaza, as well as a small stone fortification approximately 14 miles away known as Fort Matanzas.<sup>50</sup> Considering that the influence or interpretive theme for a Spanish representation was determined by the federal government almost eighty years ago, it is hard to connect the local community in influencing the decisions made by Congress without a further and extensive study; a goal not within the scope of this analysis. What can be analyzed, however, is how today’s local community helps in influencing the site today and within the framework of the missions of the National Park Service.

Steven Roberts, Chief of Interpretation for the Castillo de San Marcos, states that the site’s identity as a Spanish fort is “complex and unique” and a heritage rarely mentioned.<sup>51</sup> He further states that the Spanish interpretation reflects the duration that the

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<sup>48</sup> *ibid* 33

<sup>49</sup> *ibid* 32

<sup>50</sup> *ibid* 3

<sup>51</sup> I conducted an interview with the Chief of Interpretation, Steven Roberts on March 6, 2018. The interview was conducted in Saint Augustine at the Castillo de San Marcos. Most of what is listed after this footnote either came from the interview or from the Foundation Document. Most of the quotes used from Roberts were repeated in order to present the wording as intended. His insight to the site’s interpretive programs and local community influences are invaluable and could not have proceeded without his help.

Spanish remained in Saint Augustine and Castillo de San Marcos. There are other important timeframes of the fort where other influences were present other than the Spanish. The British once held the fort and was exchanged through a series of treaty stipulations during the eighteenth century.<sup>52</sup> When Florida was purchased by the United States in 1821, the fort became an important extension of American military presence and “the War Department changed the name of Castillo de San Marcos to Fort Marion in honor of American Revolutionary War General Francis Marion.”<sup>53</sup> The fort soon became a prison for several Native American tribes as well as a Confederate fort from 1861 to 1862 during the American Civil War.<sup>54</sup> However, the longest and most continuous theme for the site is Spanish.

Roberts likewise points to the established interpretive themes neatly packaged in the foundation document. The five most important themes are:

- The Contest of Nations: European dominance for control of the New World.
- Constructing a New World Stronghold: The fort built as an adaption to the environment.
- America’s First Great Melting Pot: Focus placed on cultural diversity.
- American Indian Incarceration: Military prison for Native Americans during the 1800s.
- Preservation and Stewardship: The ongoing attempt in preserving the fort.<sup>55</sup>

Within this framework, the site is guided by a federal agency. There is importance placed on all of the themes, however, the site does not restrict exploring other themes

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<sup>52</sup> Foundation Document 4

<sup>53</sup> *ibid* 4

<sup>54</sup> *ibid* 4

<sup>55</sup> *ibid* 9

connected with other significant past events not associated with the listed bullet points. These considerations will be further explored in this study. Perhaps the best way to describe these interpretive themes is that the “NPS strives to tell the most complete story” Roberts adds. As long as there is a historical connection with the site and other perspectives/interpretations, the NPS has the leeway to represent those themes.

The Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, like all other National Parks, has an established mission statement and core values that governs how the site will be operated:

The National Parks Service (NPS) preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the employment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resources conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.<sup>56</sup>

The core values for the site state:

- Shared stewardship: We share a commitment to resource stewardship with the global preservation community.
- Excellence: We strive continually to learn and improve so that we may achieve the highest ideals of public service.
- Integrity: We deal honestly and fairly with the public and one another.
- Tradition: We are proud of it; we learn from it; we are not bound by it.
- Respect: We embrace each other’s differences so that we may enrich the well-being of everyone.<sup>57</sup>

These central statements help guide the site in how it interacts with the public as well as with partners. These statements in no way indicate a selected or specific audience but rather an all-inclusive audience, local and distant communities, all ethnicities and races, and all genders. Furthermore, their partners are not restricted to a localized population.

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<sup>56</sup> ibid 1

<sup>57</sup> ibid 1

Their focus is on a “global preservation community.”<sup>58</sup> The local community is not excluded but rather included into a much larger framework.

### **Stakeholders**

Stakeholders become an extremely important partner for historical sites and museums.

The National Parks are no different. One of the primary responsibilities for the National Park Service is to form lasting and fruitful relationships with partners through a variety of associations. The three that will be analyzed for Castillo de San Marcos will be educational partners, the historic district of Saint Augustine, and volunteers. The foundation document, again, helps to outline the purpose of forming relationships with partners and in essence, a criteria for Castillo de San Marcos to operate within the framework of the National Park Service. It states; “Partnerships: There is a great potential to connect with the community partners to actively engage the local community with the Castillo and its preservation.”<sup>59</sup> This definition is addressed in the second portion of the document under Dynamic Components and sub classified as opportunities.<sup>60</sup> An important aspect for these opportunities is through educational institutions.

An area highlighted in these opportunities is to “develop better guidance and curriculum for school groups.”<sup>61</sup> This is facilitated in a number of ways. A “key issue” for the park is a strategy based on “an intentional framework to collaborate with education providers and school districts to provide enhanced educational experience for

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<sup>58</sup> ibid 1

<sup>59</sup> ibid 12

<sup>60</sup> ibid 12

<sup>61</sup> ibid 12



students.”<sup>62</sup> One of the most obvious examples is through fourth grade studies. As in most states, fourth grade is usually the targeted age for the development of Social Science and History. Saint Augustine is one of the most visited attractions associated with Florida History. These school groups usually follow Standards of Learning (SOLs) and some of the key objectives in visiting the Castillo are to engage the site’s programs in order to meet SOL objectives. It would be extremely hard to overlook the hundreds of students flocking to the Castillo and meandering through the historic district should individuals visit the site during the school year. Though school groups from all over the state visit the site, local districts make up the bulk of the visitations creating a sustained need for the continued interpretation of Florida history and more specifically, Spanish influenced history.

More recently, the University of Central Florida (UCF) became involved with the Saint Augustine’s National Cemetery through the Veterans Legacy Program (VLP).<sup>63</sup> One of the goals of the program is to help interpret the cemetery in order to recognize the veterans buried there. Students with UCF’s graduate program, in collaboration with the VLP, assisted in the interpretation of the cemetery’s history. The focus for one of the groups was the Seminole Indian Wars Veterans.<sup>64</sup> Interpretive themes were created for

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<sup>62</sup> *ibid* 28

<sup>63</sup> The VLP assisted with the Dade Burial Pyramid Mounds in hopes to interpret the site more clearly, more specifically the Dade burials. I, along with two others, created three interpretive signs to be used in mobile applications as well as K-12 educational programs. In the process of working with the VLP and this chapter, I began to see correlating themes between the two sites even though they are separate and with two different objectives. More information was uncovered for both projects that ultimately connected the two sites together through independent research and interviews. The two sites do communicate on occasion but they are not linked through one interpretation.

<sup>64</sup> I was involved with the creation of interpretive themes focused on the Dade Memorial Burial Pyramids from February to May 2018. We created three (3) panels that explain the history of the cemetery and dedication of the Dade burials, a timeline of the cemetery and Seminole Indian Wars, and mystery’s surrounding the burials. These panels initially began as interpretive signs to be installed in or near the

the future use in tours facilitated by mobile devices. Many of those that participated in the program are originally from the state. The cemetery provided other avenues of interpretation that likewise connects with the Castillo. There are several Native American burials located within the cemetery that have direct links with the Castillo and a theme that will be explored by the National Park in the very near future. Another consideration for the interpretations is that the early narratives of the cemetery and the Castillo are closely linked and provide a seamless and singular narrative. Many of the stories represented at both sites are interpreted with the same goals in mind, a true representation of the history of Saint Augustine and the inclusive narratives associated with it.

Many who participated with the project are originally from Florida with fond memories of visiting Saint Augustine as fourth graders. Their influence helps in establishing a solid framework for future local influence though many of the students who participated in the Veterans Legacy Program with UCF lived in the immediate area surrounding Orlando. UCF does not exactly equate to a “local” partner if measured in distance but the impact of their participation helps in directing the focus of the interpretation. Visitors receive information from Florida State residents who were once visitors themselves. Their own visits left an impressionable memory in order for them to assist with the program and the further development of the cemetery and Saint Augustine as a whole.

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cemetery but later changed to being utilized for mobile device tours due to the complexities in installing sign kiosks.

Another important example in the form of stakeholders is the Historic District of Saint Augustine. This section of the city becomes an instrumental part of the local community influence partly because of its proximity to the Castillo and becomes a quasi extension of the Castillo itself. As Roberts states, the fort is a “corner stone of the city as it has been since it was built.”<sup>65</sup> Roberts also reinforces the theme of a Spanish identity that “extends to the city even as a melting pot.”<sup>66</sup> There are two interesting points within this one statement.

The first point is that there is a recognizable association between the city and the Castillo. This association not only comes through in the architecture and period representation of the vendors, but also as a distinguishable understanding from the NPS. It is hard to gauge if one could exist without the other and a further and more in-depth study would have to examine that proposition further. Rather than considering the what-if scenarios, it is a safe assumption that the representation of the city grew organically with the representation of the Castillo.

The second point is that the city helps in identifying the site as the first real melting pot. The quick history of the city given in the introduction of this chapter helps to demonstrate this notion of a melting pot and crossroads of many cultures. Not only is there a Spanish theme associated with the site but also many other cultures found throughout the historic district such as French Huguenot cemetery, Native American influences, pirate themed museums, as well as Americana influences. The most perplexing idea of Saint Augustine’s heritage is that their Spanish theme itself is not fully

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<sup>65</sup> S. Roberts, personal interview, March 6, 2018.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid*

Spanish. All of the cultures listed above help to illustrate a unique culture found in Saint Augustine and demonstrates a conglomerate of cultural traits creating a distinctive ambiance. Jenny Wolf, the Historic Preservation Officer for the City of Saint Augustine, explains that there are codes implemented for the historic district that establishes guidelines for how the structures are to be maintained and essentially, interpreted.<sup>67</sup> These guidelines help in promoting the uniqueness of Saint Augustine and a continued interest in representing an altered Spanish interpretation. All through the help of local community influences.

This extension of the Castillo de San Marcos helps in creating an interpretation that promotes exclusivity in the sense that Saint Augustine's heritage is rare. The themed atmosphere of the historic district is represented through its link to the Castillo and the cultures that helped establish this city and structures. This opportunity for the Castillo to capitalize on an existing framework for continued interpretation of the many cultures found in the city, especially Spanish, creates a strong community influence that organically propagates a characteristic not found easily in other historical sites or museums.

A third and final example examined within stakeholders is the volunteer corps that helps with the interpretation of Castillo de San Marcos. The foundation document has a section dedicate for the goal of the Castillo to foster "Friends group/Partnerships" and states that working with these types of groups "could add value to various park efforts."<sup>68</sup> Another important aspect for the Castillo is to formulate an evaluation system

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<sup>67</sup> J. Wolf, personal interview, February 2018.

<sup>68</sup> Foundation document 27

in order to gauge potential partners for “their viability and utility so that partnerships are mutually beneficial to all participants.”<sup>69</sup> This document establishes guidelines for the intentional fostering of partnerships with the community as well as a means to ensure these relationships are in line with the NPS’s own values and fundamentals.

The first group or partnership Roberts speaks of is the Florida Historic Militia.<sup>70</sup> This organization and many of sub groups associated with this parent organization can easily be located through social media outlets as well as on the streets of Historic Saint Augustine. They are usually attired in period costumes and assist with the overall interpretation of a European styled city on an American frontier. One of the most interesting periods or events they often interpret is the peaceful exchange of the fort between Spanish and English soldiers. The event is often publicized through social media and represents a celebratory typed atmosphere. He further adds that they often assist with the content for the interpretive signs found throughout the Castillo.<sup>71</sup> These signs help the visitor understand the history being represented when there are no park guides or rangers available for direct interactions. The Florida Historic Militia’s assistance through the use of costumed attire and scholarship for the interpretive signs adds to the ever-growing interpretation of the site though local community involvement.

Volunteer involvement likewise helps in interpreting new stories not often associated with the Castillo. The Monsan motel, the site of a civil rights protest, is now becoming an interpretive narrative and connects the Castillo to the regional history of

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<sup>69</sup> *ibid* 29

<sup>70</sup> S. Roberts, personal interview, March 6, 2018.

<sup>71</sup> *ibid*

North East Florida as well as a national narrative.<sup>72</sup> Another interpretation being expanded is the Seminole Indians and other Native Americans held in the Castillo as prisoners. Roberts states that he is currently speaking with representatives from the present day Seminole Indian tribe.<sup>73</sup> He states that this dialogue assists the NPS employees as well as the volunteers to interpret the Native American experience and “how to speak about the Seminole imprisonments.”<sup>74</sup> Roberts is not referring to the technique used in delivering the narrative but rather the language used to respectfully represent the Seminoles while engaging with the visitor. This concept of representing all narratives is fairly new to the public history field when comparing it to the study of American History as a whole. Different perspectives have emerged since the 1990s and the rise of cultural history. Roberts also credits these changes to the shifting historiographies of the Castillo’s inclusive history.<sup>75</sup> All of which can be traced to shifts in social strata and dynamics. Individuals visiting the Castillo during the 1970s more than likely received a very different interpretation than visitors today. In today’s terms, if a site refuses to incorporate inclusive history for all cultures that connect with a site, they could potential experience a decrease in visitations. The local community of Saint Augustine and surrounding region help in interpreting the history for the Castillo through many perspectives.

Lastly, Roberts refers to visitors as having an influence on their site. One of the key components found throughout the foundation document is the importance of the visitor. The concern for the visitor is found in the mission statement of the NPS, their

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<sup>72</sup> *ibid*

<sup>73</sup> *ibid*

<sup>74</sup> *ibid*

<sup>75</sup> *ibid*

core values, and their fundamental resources and values.<sup>76</sup> He states that in one day, 6,700 individuals visited the Castillo, a record for their attendance.<sup>77</sup> The visitor becomes an instrumental aspect when it comes to interpretation. Rather than strictly given factual data such as dates, places, or people, Roberts states he likes to have a “facilitated dialogue.”<sup>78</sup> He still guides the tours but rather than him telling the audience everything, he likes to engage them as well as creating a learning experience for all.

My own experience in giving tours with Fort Monroe National Monument gives me a great deal of insight into this technique.<sup>79</sup> We like to tell our visitors that we are going on a journey with them and not giving a tour. Roberts’ description and my own technique produces a conversation allowing for all to learn from each other. Though the tours are structured and guided by a NPS employee, there still remains an opportunity for the visitor to assist with the interpretation and perhaps add to it.

## **Funding**

The third and final component examined for this particular site is funding. Each site is unique in the way it handles funding or lack there of. For the Castillo, the parameters or constraints are a bit more simplified since it is governed by a federal agency. Roberts states that the Superintendent is ultimately responsible for the budget and therefore, how

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<sup>76</sup> Foundation document 1;11-18

<sup>77</sup> S. Roberts, personal interview, March 6, 2018.

<sup>78</sup> *ibid*

<sup>79</sup> Currently, I am working as a Park Guide for Fort Monroe National Monument and I have a great deal of experience in guided tours and interpretation for the National Park Service. The technique Roberts speaks of can be found throughout the National Park Service because it is based on the work of Freeman Tilden, an instrumental contributor to interpretation and the NPS. It is currently being used as a foundation for their interpretive programs.

the funds are distributed.<sup>80</sup> Ultimately this budget helps in how the narratives are interpreted. To give a line-by-line account of how their budget is used is a bit too complex and for privacy reason, not divulged to me in how the site allocates its funds. However, Roberts does state that a part of their interpretive budget comes from the fees paid by visitors<sup>81</sup>. He further adds that on average, they see 1.3 million visitors yearly and with an average cost of \$15.00 per adult, you can see that the budget is rather ample. This is just an average and does not account for annual passes, free entrances for select individuals, or children rates. However, an assumption can lead to a health budget for interpretative considerations and a continued example of visitor influence as stakeholders towards interpretation.

One example of how they use their interpretive budget is through signs located on the site's property. These signs help in displaying the narratives that represent the Castillo. As stated before, the local community assists the staff with the content and therefore, how the public perceives the interpretation. Many of the leading academics in the realm of public history all seem to agree that a sign does not replace good interpretation given by an individual. However, they also agree that a sign is better than nothing.

These fees likewise help in how the site employees are paid. Four of the rangers are paid through the Operations of the National Park Service (ONPS). In other words, these employees are directly paid through their annual budget.<sup>82</sup> The other fifteen employees are paid through the same fees collected by visitors. Roberts states, the park is

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<sup>80</sup> S. Roberts, personal interview, March 6, 2018.

<sup>81</sup> *ibid*

<sup>82</sup> *ibid*



a very fortunate one in its ability to hire so many employees through the assistance of visitor fees.<sup>83</sup>

One of the Castillo de San Marcos' primary goals is to tell the "most complete story."<sup>84</sup> They accomplish this in many ways with the help of the local community. Though guided by a very different governance system than the other two we will be looking at in the next chapters, there still remains a presence of local community influence.

Saint Augustine, Florida and the Castillo de San Marcos represent a very unique historical site through the representation of so many cultures spanning over 450 years. The overarching theme of a Spanish influence helps the National Park Service build upon the interpretation of the Castillo. The foundation document establishes guidelines for the site to adhere to and retains more of a structure than other sites. This framework helps establish precedence and a tested approach in how to interact not only with visitors but also with volunteers, partners, and the local community. Their criteria, likewise outlined in the foundation document, also establish a specified guideline into what traits are acceptable in forming partnerships. This helps the staff of the Castillo to formulate their own direction with whom they wish to work with and what volunteers they wish to associate with, thus guiding which narratives are represented. The funding for the site is also beneficial because it is a reliable amount. The government may adjust their budget year to year; however, there is an established budget that can also be manipulated year to year in order to meet their needs and requirements. They also have further funds received

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<sup>83</sup> *ibid*

<sup>84</sup> *ibid*

in the form of fees paid by visitors as well as donations that was not covered in this analysis.

Local community influences will vary in degrees as to the amount of influence actually projected onto sites. A site as large as the Castillo de San Marcos may appear to not be affected by such influences for a number of reasons. The most obvious is that it is a National Park. However, when the layers are pulled back, it reveals that this site is still affected by the local community, not to the degree as other sites but affect nonetheless.

## **CHAPTER THREE: FORT MONROE AND THE CASEMATE MUSEUM**

I conducted an internship with the Casemate Museum and the Fort Monroe Authority (FMA) during the summer of 2017 from May to August. One of my roles as the Education and Interpretation intern was to rewrite and edit the “Tour Guide Manual for Volunteers.” During my time, I gave tours to various audiences, school groups, as well as assisting with special events such as Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and other activities. The Curator for the museum was gracious enough in allowing me to participate in the Fort Monroe Visitor and Education Center Planning Charrette that gave me a unique and behind the scenes look into how interpretation is affected by the local community. This event is also what inspired me to pursue my thesis in local community influences of interpretation. Other duties were to research their current exhibits so that I was able to contribute to the interpretation of these exhibits as well as introduce new concepts and topics for future displays. Some of the information gained for this case study was through participatory-observation. In addition, an intensive and in-depth historiography was written in order to gain a better understanding of the history surrounding the fort and how that history has been interpreted over the years

Fort Monroe is located in Hampton, Virginia on a thin strip of land at the confluence of the Chesapeake Bay and James River. Time and modern interventions have helped steer Fort Monroe away from its intentional purpose as a coastal fortification since its construction dating back to the 1820s. A moat surrounds the stonewalled fort and was intended to measure eight feet deep during high tide and five feet deep during low tide.

The moat also connects to one of the local rivers and rises and falls with the Hampton Roads tidal plain. The moat no longer retains the depths that it was designed for due to debris and sand deposits since its excavation and now measures a depth of five feet at high tide and two feet at low tide. As visitors enter any of the three single lane bridge vehicle entry points, they soon realize that the fort itself is in remarkable condition for its age. Visitors find themselves surrounded by nineteenth and twentieth century military housing and administration buildings while traveling along an interior road bordered by the ramparts. Historical markers proliferate the grounds reminding visitors that this deactivated Army post was once the scene of a very significant and influential bastion of military significance dating back to 1609.

The Army post reverted back to the State of Virginia after it was deactivated in September 2011. Four entities now collaborate with each other in order to preserve the fort and the surrounding region as well as contributing to its tourism and historical representation. These four partners consist of the National Park Service (NPS), FMA (Agency of the State of Virginia), the Department of the Army, and the City of Hampton. The Casemate Museum is a sub-division of the FMA. The site itself has been fortified in some fashion since the original settlers of Jamestown discovered its strategic military importance in 1607 and four forts have occupied the site with Fort Monroe being the fourth and last. It has served as a training post, bastion of protection during the Civil War, a coastal defense during the two World Wars, and as the Training and Doctrine Command for the United States Army. The military has been involved with the fort and region since its inception.

The historiography has changed drastically over the years and three seminal works track the developing and changing perspectives used to interpret Fort Monroe. *A History of Old Point Comfort and Fortress Monroe, VA.: From 1608 to January 1st, 1881*, *Defender of the Chesapeake: The Story of Fort Monroe*, and *Fort Monroe: The Key to the South* have all contributed to the history and focus in how Fort Monroe chooses to be represented.<sup>85</sup> Though many of the narratives and perspectives have changed, each display how society and the interpretations have evolved over the course of 120 years.

J. Arnold Dalby's *A History of Old Point Comfort and Fortress Monroe, VA.* is one of the first comprehensive views into Fort Monroe history. His work covers 1608 up to 1881 and records many of the major events associated with historical events in South East Virginia with over half of the book written from the Civil War era. His work reflects a white male perspective when describing the crowning achievements associated with the site. "Kecoughtan, or Hampton, is a place of great antiquity, and deserves a history of its own, which some day may be written. But to speak of the ancient town of Hampton without a word or two of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad would be to ignore a great and living fact..."<sup>86</sup> His focus on the railroad and not the culture and inhabitants who resided here prior to European development is a direct reflection of social and political climates, which seem to have influenced how history was recorded in the 1880s. Considering the academic field of History was in its infancy with a focus on social

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<sup>85</sup> J. Arnold Dalby, *A History of Old Point Comfort and Fortress Monroe, Va.: From 1608 to January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1881*, (Norfolk: Landmark Steam Book and Job Presses, 1881): 1-91.; John Quarstein and Dennis Mroczkowski, *Fort Monroe: The Key to the South*, (Charleston: Arcadia, 2000), 1-127; Richard Weinert Jr. and Robert Arthur, *Defender of the Chesapeake: The Story of Fort Monroe*, (Shippensburg: White Mane, 1989), 1-340.

<sup>86</sup> J. Arnold Dalby, *A History of Old Point Comfort and Fortress Monroe, VA.: From 1608 to January 1st, 1881, With Sketches of Hampton Normal School, National Soldier's Home and the Hygeia Hotel*, (Norfolk, VA: Landmark Steam and Job Presses, 1881), 54.

development rather than culture, this style of writing was expected and common given the timeframe.

He explains in his preface that it was the “[Baltimore] Herald who tasked him with writing a history of Old Point Comfort” and adds that “for the general reader much of the historical memorandum which enters into my introduction may be uninteresting; but the facts I am about to set forth have a special value for military readers and persons of a studious turn...”<sup>87</sup> Thus, many of his inclusions reflected through his explanation of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad exemplifies his own introduction and is found throughout his work.

The research and evidence that is used were “valuable State papers and other works in the possession of a gentleman of this city, well known to the literary public...”<sup>88</sup> Dalby’s book, through many examples and by his own words in his introduction, suggests a one-sided narrative with the help of a few extremely influential individuals. There is no mention of the Native American influence or the African American influence that the present day site concentrates on and is currently revising their own volunteer manual to reflect the diverse demographics associated with Old Point Comfort.

Dalby does caution the reader that this work is intended for the “military readers” so there are already some expectations of what the reader will encounter. Dalby does, however, record a curious side note concerning the Hampton Normal School (present day Hampton University), which had enrolled from its inception in 1868 to when his work was published, “fourteen hundred and twenty-nine ...most of whom are colored boys and

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<sup>87</sup> Dalby, *A History of Old Point Comfort*, 6.

<sup>88</sup> Dalby, *A History of Old Point Comfort*, 6.

girls”.<sup>89</sup> He further adds “So you can understand that it has been fully demonstrated that not only the negro but the red brother is being benefitted by these normal schools: and when the Indian is once educated that is to a great extent the end of Indian wars.”<sup>90</sup> Again, his rhetoric is indicative of the social and political climate of the era.

Richard Weinert Jr. and Colonel Robert Arthur likewise focus on Fort Monroe mainly as a military subject but do add other social aspects associated with the area more than Dalby. It certainly is difficult approaching the history of Fort Monroe any other way due to its existence as a military stronghold and post. Their inclusion of the Native Americans is still lacking in any real sense of equal representation but their first encounters with John Smith and the other English Europeans is included.<sup>91</sup> Their inclusion of the escaped enslaved individuals who sought refuge in 1861 during the Civil War is also included marking a drastic shift from Dalby’s own records who mentions nothing of the Contraband Decision and the actions taken by General Butler.<sup>92</sup>

Over one hundred years separates the publication of Dalby’s and the third revision of Weinert so the inclusion of Native and African American influences do appear to be emerging at this point. The military aspect and specifically the Civil War still presents the overarching theme present in this book with the authors stating, “The next five years were to be the most dramatic and, in many ways, the most important in the long history of Fort Monroe.”<sup>93</sup> Minority actions and contributions associated with Fort Monroe still remain absent from the pages of their work. One would wonder how

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<sup>89</sup> Dalby, *A History of Old Point Comfort*, 58.

<sup>90</sup> Dalby, *A History of Old Point Comfort*, 59.

<sup>91</sup> Weinert, *Defender of the Chesapeake*, 1-4.

<sup>92</sup> Weinert, *Defender of the Chesapeake*, 112-113.

<sup>93</sup> Weinert, *Defender of the Chesapeake*, 94.

the authors lack of mentioning minority contributions were easily overlooked considering the role in which the site is now portraying through the site exhibits.<sup>94</sup> Their book, though thoroughly researched, still remains focused on white male achievements. They do present another side of Old Point Comfort history. Their reflection on the resort-like atmosphere helps to delineate between a strict military atmosphere and that of social activity. The addition of the hotels and activities not only represents a timeline of recorded history for the fort but also demonstrates the diversity of the history of the fort. Weinert adds, “At times the social life even became a bit exotic.”<sup>95</sup> By exotic, the authors describe parties, distinguished visitors, and relaxing ambiance which appear to still intertwined with the military social gatherings including military balls and parades.<sup>96</sup>

John Quarstein and Dennis Mroczkowski sum up Fort Monroe’s history best by stating, “Fort Monroe, despite its luxurious setting, was designed for war.” However, where Quarstein and Mroczkowski succeed, in *Fort Monroe: The Key to the South*, where the other two books fail is the inclusion of African Americans and women influences in the area. Their inclusion of the contraband decision, American Missionary Association, and the many roles in which women played demonstrates the diverse and unique presence of all who contributed to the history of Fort Monroe.<sup>97</sup>

Quarstein and Mroczkowski also help to demonstrate diversity through the use of many illustrations and photographs that visually reflect their research and give the reader a more in-depth and realistic view into the fort’s past. Their presentation, however, is

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<sup>94</sup> U.S. Army, *The Casemate Museum and Fort Monroe: A Manual for Tour Guides*, rev. ed. 2013, 5-56, Appendix 1.

<sup>95</sup> Weinert, *Defender of the Chesapeake*, 171.

<sup>96</sup> Weinert, *Defender of the Chesapeake*, 170-171.

<sup>97</sup> Quarstein, *Fort Monroe: The Key to the South*, 36-39, 75-77.



limited in scope due to the subject matter of the book's focus of the Civil War. But what does emerge is a shift in the historiography of Fort Monroe and the region with the inclusion of individuals who were excluded from the other two books.

As mentioned before, the history of the region is closely tied to the history of the fort and it is here that many other authors have contributed to the historiography of Fort Monroe. The first substantial addition centers on the Virginia Indian. James Mooney's "The Powhatan Confederacy, Past and Present" is a very good account of the evidence annotated by John Smith and William Strachey. Written in 1907, his article gives the reader a very detailed look into how large the Powhatan Indian tribes were, their interactions with the European settlers, and a quick glimpse into their methods in governance and control.<sup>98</sup>

Mooney quickly discredits the common notion that the first time Native Americans interacted with Europeans was in the founding of Jamestown in 1607.<sup>99</sup> Mooney states, "The Jamestown colonists of 1607 were not the first whites with whom the natives came in contact, or even the first to attempt a settlement."<sup>100</sup> Mooney helps to establish a view from the Virginia Indian, though his research and evidence is based off of a European perspective through the words of Smith and Strachey. His article paves the way for further exploration that has so often been published in recent years from a new perspective from the Virginia Indian influence. His article title, however, presents a conflict with how he describes Powhatan and how the Powhatan "Confederacy" was formed or even operated. "Some years he [Powhatan] had taken advantage of the death

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<sup>98</sup> James Mooney, "The Powhatan Confederacy: Past and Present," *American Anthropologist* 9, no. 1 (Jan.-Mar., 1907), 130-134.

<sup>99</sup> Mooney, "The Powhatan Confederacy," 129.

<sup>100</sup> Mooney, "The Powhatan Confederacy," 129.

of the chief of the Kecoughtan to invade their territory, kill all who made resistance, and transported the rest to his own country...”<sup>101</sup> The Kecoughtan Indians were the tribe located at Old Point Comfort and who John Smith encountered before traveling to the area that would become Jamestown.<sup>102</sup>

Mooney further states that, “The Iroquois League was founded upon mutual accommodation and common interest, the Powhatan confederacy was founded on conquest and despotic personal authority...”<sup>103</sup> In today’s terms, we usually associate the term confederacy as Mooney describes the Iroquois and not how he describes the Powhatan. Was this an oversight on Mooney’s part in his title? Has the term itself changed in meaning from 1907? The Powhatan tribes resemble more of an empire rather than a mutually supporting and agreed upon alliance. Considering the alternative to other books such as Dalby’s, Mooney’s contribution gives readers a new understanding of the Virginia Indian influence in the region and a new perspective. Granted, his research relies heavily on Eurocentric views, Mooney’s work challenges common misconceptions that still exist today through an article written 110 years ago.

David Price presents a new perspective on defining the Powhatan in his book *Love and Hate in Jamestown; John Smith, Pocahontas, and the Start of a New Nation*. He immediately classifies the Powhatan as an empire in his prologue and never once mentions the word “confederacy.”<sup>104</sup> This term variance may seem trivial but remains a topic of discussion amongst anthropologist, historians, and Virginia Indians to date. The

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<sup>101</sup> Mooney, “The Powhatan Confederacy,” 136.

<sup>102</sup> Army, *The Casemate Museum*, 9.

<sup>103</sup> Mooney, “The Powhatan Confederacy,” 136.

<sup>104</sup> David Price, *Love and Hate in Jamestown: John Smith, Pocahontas, and the Start of a new Nation*, (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2003), 5.

term preferred by Virginia Native Americans is Virginia Indians and is used throughout their community. In no way does the term “Indian” reflect a negative connotation and will be used for the remainder of the chapter when speaking specifically about the indigenous populations of Virginia. The terms empire versus confederacy and Native American versus Virginia Indian are a few examples of the regional history and its historiography. The authors involved with writing some form of history concerning this region and Fort Monroe have and will invariably encounter this discussion on which words are appropriate. The notion of empire versus confederacy is crucial in determining how and why John Smith and European interactions were facilitated. The term empire is not usually associated as a positive attribute and in the case of European exchanges in the early seventeenth century. It represents a means of justifying the complete subjugation of the region. He also adds that, “What the English did not realize was that they were facing a tightly run, partially adept empire.”<sup>105</sup> Again, Price is using a portion of his evidence from the words of John Smith and William Strachey. Perhaps by bolstering the discipline and leadership of the Powhatan, a worthy opponent appears and not an easily conquered foe making English success that much more impressive.

Frederic Gleach helps to explain the process in understanding the European and Indian relationships in the region as well as to help explain the rabbit hole we so often fall down through the use of certain words. His book *Powhatan's World and Colonial Virginia* helps to illustrate new perspectives of how other notable authors are approaching old terms and how other scholars are reinterpreting history on the Peninsula of Virginia. “All tend to ignore the native cultures as viable entities in their own right, however; they

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<sup>105</sup> Price, *Love and Hate in Jamestown*, 40.

are Euro-American interpretations of distinctly different sets of cultural traditions that must be seen in their own terms for a proper understanding of their histories.”<sup>106</sup> By examining each individual Native American tribe, or in the case of the Powhatan Empire, the reader begins to look at that respective subject matter as approachable and interactive. In other words, they become more tangible than a gross classification of a race of individuals who seemingly behave, look, and possess the same motives as has been so recklessly been portrayed in the past. The Casemate Museum has begun to approach the study of the Virginia Indians in the same light as Gleach masterfully highlights.<sup>107</sup> He also questions old terms such as “massacre” or “uprising” when describing the Indian and European conflicts that erupted in 1622 and other subsequent encounters.<sup>108</sup> By redefining these events, the term massacre no longer demonizes the actions of the Indians. Likewise, redefining the term uprising emphasizes the fact that the Indians were being subjugated and unable to control their immediate surroundings at the time of these encounters. Gleach cites authors Rountree, Potter and Fausz by classifying these conflicts as the Anglo-Powhatan Wars.<sup>109</sup> Through this term, the authors help to illustrate a new approach on how the reader understands the conflict. By naming these conflicts as two opposing nations, the Indians have now risen as equals like the Europeans and forces a new approach to the study of Indian and European relations on the Peninsula of Virginia.

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<sup>106</sup> Frederic Gleach, *Powhatan's World and Colonial Virginia: A Conflict of Cultures*, Lincoln, NE: The University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 2.

<sup>107</sup> Army, *The Casemate Museum*, 9.

<sup>108</sup> Gleach, *Powhatan's World*, 4.

<sup>109</sup> Gleach, *Powhatan's World*, 4-5.

Helen Rountree, a professor from Old Dominion University, proceeds through an anthropological approach in the study of the Powhatan culture and Indians in *The Powhatan Indians of Virginia: Their Traditional Culture*. “The Powhatans were ‘stone age people’ in a region where stone is not plentiful and most of the trees are hardwoods. This fact is central to an appreciation of their technology.”<sup>110</sup> She also points out the fact that they often traded with other Native Americans to obtain other objects in order to better their circumstances. Emphasizing the ability to overcome the use of stone tools and continued trade does two things.

First, it helps to describe a very resourceful and ingenious culture; a culture that the English kept in contact with for an extended period of time. Though they lacked iron, guns, and powder, their own technology kept the English at bay until sheer numbers overwhelmed them. Secondly, it helps to illustrate how Native Americans, to include the Virginia Indians, were already connected on the North American continent through extensive trade networks. There is a growing trend with other historians, as well as anthropologist, in trying to correct past misconceptions of how Europeans provided the Native Americans with everything they needed and that there was no interconnectedness amongst Native American tribes before their arrival. The combined approach of history and science helps to turn past romantic notions of European arrival in South East Virginia on its head and what appears is a very different look at Native American culture and more specifically, Powhatan culture.

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<sup>110</sup> Helen Rountree, *The Powhatan Indians of Virginia: Their Traditional Culture*, (Norman OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 32.

Daniel Richter helps in the endeavor to redefine history when it comes to Euro-Native American relations in *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*. As his title suggest, his work focuses on the lesser-known side of the early arrival of the Europeans from the Native American viewpoint. Though his work does not exclusively focus on the Powhatan culture or Virginia Indian, it is his focus on a Native American perspective that allows his book to become so influential in helping to determine how Fort Monroe's history and its region is portrayed. His inclusion of viewing Powhatan's motives when Pocahontas was adopted and married to John Rolfe likewise establishes a growing trend of placing the Virginia Indians as equals with the Europeans.<sup>111</sup> The only issue with this is that some of this evidence is still produced by John Smith's own hand. The other portion of this evidence heavily relies on Powhatan culture and practices as well as Algonquin, the larger Native American band in which the Powhatan belonged to, none of which is recorded through written literature. Richter proposes that Pocahontas may not have been excluded from her own people but given to the Europeans as a diplomatic emissary.<sup>112</sup> The English did not save Pocahontas' soul and convert her; she becomes a political chess piece and a chosen representative of the Powhatan; a political symbol between two powerful and equal nations.

Another invaluable portion of history that seems to have been neglected from past authors or society as a whole are the Africans and African-Americans who equally influenced Fort Monroe and the region. Anthony Parent helps to explain how enslaved labor came to be in Colonial Virginia in *Foul Means: The Formation of a Slave Society in*

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<sup>111</sup> Daniel Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 78.

<sup>112</sup> Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country*, 78.

*Virginia, 1660-1740*. In addition, the museum is currently revising its volunteer manual, which has already established and has included the arrival of the first Africans to an English-speaking colony.<sup>113</sup> It is in this respect that Parent becomes an essential part in the historiography. Parent examines the dispersal of the Virginia Indians as European colonists filter in to capitalize on the large amounts of land now available for farming.<sup>114</sup> Parent also includes the arrival and development of cash crops corresponding to the large tracts of land once inhabited by the Indians and correlates the increase in land and crops to increased use of enslaved labor along with other economic reasons.<sup>115</sup> “Prices for servants rose as their supply waned, beginning about 1665. Given the shortage of labor and the abundance of land, planters had to consider a new source.”<sup>116</sup> Fort Monroe marks the arrival of around twenty Africans in 1619 as the first arrival of enslaved labor in an English North American colony.<sup>117</sup> The arrival of these Africans help to establish the use of enslaved labor and connects the direction in which Fort Monroe and the Casemate Museum are proceeding with its interpretation of those excluded in previous narratives. Parent’s work along with the direction in which Fort Monroe is proceeding establishes an epoch for the enslavement of Africans and African-Americans that lasts until the Civil War.

Another theme that focuses on the African-American influence at Fort Monroe is the Contraband Decision of 1861. James Marten approaches the contraband event through the use of accounts that describe the good and the bad often associated with large

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<sup>113</sup> Army, *The Casemate Museum*, 9.

<sup>114</sup> Anthony Parent, *Foul Means: The Formation of a Slave Society in Virginia, 1660-1740*, (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 9-40.

<sup>115</sup> Parent, *Foul Means*, 55.

<sup>116</sup> Parent, *Foul Means*, 55.

<sup>117</sup> Army, *The Casemate Museum*, 9.

groups of refugees in his article “A Feeling of Restless Anxiety: Loyalty and Race in the Peninsula Campaign and Beyond.” “From the beginning, refugees had fled into the tiny haven of Union authority at Fort Monroe to escape hard labor on Confederate fortifications.”<sup>118</sup> Marten’s description of the contraband phenomenon is no different from the *Defender of the Chesapeake* and *Fort Monroe: Key to the South*. Where Marten’s article departs from other authors is that the focus of his article centers on race relations and how this movement was viewed from both sides of the war.

Marten emphasizes that the intent of the Contraband Decision was not for the immediate abolishment of slavery, nor a view of consideration for the abolishment of slavery. Butler “once boasted of the escape of a dozen black men who had previously been working on a Confederate battery that had just that morning fired on his men.”<sup>119</sup> He further adds, “Butler thought of them not as free people but as temporarily confiscated commodities—it soon became clear that they would not be returned to their masters.”<sup>120</sup> Marten’s description concerning the African-Americans or contraband emphasizes the questionable treatment of the refugees rather than solely focusing on the positive results in which the Contraband Decision led to, “All able-bodied African Americans were put to work, but their pay came not in cash but in food and clothing—a system remarkably, and no doubt alarmingly, to many of the workers—like slavery.”<sup>121</sup> By illustrating the fortunate as well as the unfortunate circumstances that revolved around the contrabands, Marten’s article represents a nonbiased view thus, strengthening his research.

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<sup>118</sup> James Marten, “A Feeling of Restless Anxiety: Loyalty and Race in the Peninsula Campaign and Beyond,” *The Richmond Campaign of 1862: The Peninsula and the Seven Days*, ed. Gary Gallagher (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 132.

<sup>119</sup> Marten, “A Feeling of Restless Anxiety,” 134.

<sup>120</sup> Marten, “A Feeling of Restless Anxiety,” 134.

<sup>121</sup> Marten, “A Feeling of Restless Anxiety,” 138.



## **Governance**

The historiography of the site was given in great detail because of the complexities that surround how history is portrayed to the public, more specifically, a site whose roots revolve around the topic of slavery and marginalized societies. The interpretation of the Casemate Museum has come a long way from one exhibit highlighting the prison cell Jefferson Davis once occupied to the many different facets incorporated through their collections. As stated before, the Casemate Museum and the NPS work in partnership with two other entities; however, the two mentioned represent the most influential activity. Though run by different forms of government (one is federal and the other state), the NPS and the FMA work in conjunction so that the audience receives a unified message when speaking of interpretation.<sup>122</sup> Together, they assist each other in interpreting Fort Monroe's past collectively and rely on each other's support in order to fulfill their goals and objectives.<sup>123</sup> Aside from the collective cooperation, the Casemate Museum is part of the FMA and falls under their jurisdiction as far as being a state agency.

An interview was conducted with the Director of the Museum Mr. Robin Reed, Operations and Collections Manager Ms. Veronica Gallardo, and Education and Volunteer Coordinator Mrs. Darcy Sink. Reed states that the museum has changed from federal authority (when the museum was a part of the Department of the Army) to its

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<sup>122</sup> Fort Monroe Authority Annual Report 2016 (Fort Monroe: Howell Creative Group June 2017), 11.

<sup>123</sup> I conducted an interview with several members of the Casemate Museum on May 24, 2018. In attendance were Robin Reed, Veronica Gallardo, and Darcy Sink. Together several topics were analyzed to include the governance of the site, stakeholders, as well as funding considerations. In addition, my own experience was discussed so that the participatory-observation could further be evaluated and understood. The staff of the Casemate Museum continue to interpret the history surrounding the Hampton Roads region and Fort Monroe and a new Visitors and Education Center is due to be completed in the year 2019. The year 2019 marks the 400 year anniversary of the first Africans to arrive in an English speaking colony at Old Point Comfort, the geographical area where Fort Monroe is.

current affiliation under state authority.<sup>124</sup> When this change of hands occurred from the Department of the Army to the State of Virginia, the museum and its contents were likewise transferred to the State of Virginia and all departments within the Casemate. Gallardo states that when this transferred occurred, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) were created outlining how the collections or material culture were to be treated and therefore, presented to the public.<sup>125</sup> Gallardo and Reed both referred to these documents as the “core documents” placing an extremely heavy influence on the importance for interpreting Fort Monroe’s history.

Both parties agree to work together for the mutual benefit of the Fort Monroe community and the U.S. Army as a partnership to support the Casemate Museum operations, which are designed to train Soldiers and educate the public about historic aspects of the U.S. Army and Fort Monroe: to preserve important Army historical property; and to promote Army and citizenship values.<sup>126</sup>

The document does in fact outline how the museum is to handle the collections it has received but there is still a substantial amount of leeway as to how the collections are to be displayed. The intent behind the statement is how the museum assists in interpreting the collections and history to the public. Discovering how interpretation has evolved helps in determining how governance or management guides how the museum operates.

Reed helps in shedding some light into how the evolution of interpretation has progressed and therefore, how the museum remains open to the public and within the guidelines of the MOA and MOU. He states the “wave of influence has changed” when

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<sup>124</sup> *ibid*

<sup>125</sup> *ibid*

<sup>126</sup> Memorandum of Agreement Between the U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH) and The Fort Monroe Authority (FMA), *Transition of the Casemate Museum* February 28, 2011, 13.

discussing the roles and responsibilities of public historical sites.<sup>127</sup> The field of public history has changed in who operates and interprets the history at historic sites. Denise Meringolo reinforces this perspective in stating that like public history, “The fact that women were among the pioneers of fields like botany and anthropology only reinforced the dismissive perception that these fields were ‘soft’.”<sup>128</sup> She further illustrates her point through the Mount Vernon Ladies Association who purchased the home of George Washington in 1859.<sup>129</sup> Their intent though began as an effort to preserve the Union, “only reinforced the association of historic preservation with domesticity.”<sup>130</sup> This helps to highlight a one-side perspective portraying the history of the aristocratic crust of American society in the form of white Anglo-American men. No serious effort was made to take public historical sites seriously due to the nature of those that sought to preserve the sites and therefore, a reflection of a lopsided representation of American culture and history grew. Reed’s phrase of “wave of influence” helps to illustrate the museum’s representation of “minorities that tie to [their] collections” in today’s terms<sup>131</sup>

Darcy Sink helps to explain as the Education Coordinator. She states that the exhibits help connect the museum through “community, regional, and national” narratives to a “diverse audience with the community in mind.”<sup>132</sup> Gallardo states that she prefers to view the representation of history as a “bottom-up approach” and “looking at

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<sup>127</sup> R. Reed, V. Gallardo, and D. Sink, personal interview, May 24, 2018.

<sup>128</sup> Denise Meringolo, *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks: Toward a New genealogy of Public History* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012), 10-11.

<sup>129</sup> *ibid* 12

<sup>130</sup> *ibid* 12

<sup>131</sup> R. Reed, V. Gallardo, and D. Sink, personal interview, May 24, 2018.

<sup>132</sup> *ibid*

history as a whole.”<sup>133</sup> She adds that under the previous model of public historical sites, “minorities may not feel connected with museums.”<sup>134</sup> These changes in how history is being interpreted through the Casemate Museum falls in line with the direction of the MOA as well as the FMA through positive representations reflective of all components of society and not reserved for a select few. So how do these principles establish local community influence?

### **Stakeholders**

Stakeholders provide a unique perspective into how the site interprets its history as well.

As mentioned earlier, a charrette was conducted in the summer of 2017 for the development of the Fort Monroe and Education Center scheduled to be opened in 2019. Those who attended contributed their own thoughts on how the new center should interpret the history of the fort and region. The individuals who attended represented varying backgrounds from the local community in the form of African/African-American cultural organizations, Virginia Indian organizations, Daughters of the Confederacy, as well as prominent professors and authors.<sup>135</sup> Though Reed admitted that their contributions did not fully determine how the Visitor and Education Center was to be developed, he also added that their contributions were taken into consideration and helped in some of the future exhibits.

Volunteers likewise assist in the museum and fort’s representation through their participation. Sink explains that she currently manages sixty volunteers. The time

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<sup>133</sup> *ibid*

<sup>134</sup> *ibid*

<sup>135</sup> Jason FitzGerald, “Minuets for Fort Monroe Visitor and Education Center Planning Charrette,” abstract, (June 2017): 1-11.

contributed to the site in the form of volunteer hours helps the museum's operations beyond measure and as Todd Ballance has pointed out in the introduction is an extremely important asset. Sink states that the hours accumulated through researchers, docents, and interns helps in receiving money through grants, which then revert back to further educational programs and exhibits. But their contributions go further than the hours they spend conducting volunteer work. Visitors from outside the area, different states, as well as different countries, interact with the volunteers, most of who reside in the Hampton Roads area. Whether a greeter welcomes them, attend a tour with a docent, or read information from a researcher, visitors interact with the site through those that contribute their time from the local community. All of these volunteers give their specific perspectives and interpretations on the site's history.

There is a manual to assist the volunteers in their interactions with the visitors but the manual is not scripted.<sup>136</sup> Though the manual gives guidelines and basic question and answer formats, the volunteers bring their own distinct interpretative techniques. With the help of the staff, they actively engage various school groups in structured educational formats that are age appropriate. Not only are school groups the focus of schedule tours but an array of other types of groups ranging from military audiences, retired community audiences, and groups affiliated through other representations visit the museum in a group structured setting. The museum also participates in a formatted daily tour, in conjunction with the NPS, given to visitors who wish to participate in a walking tour during the summer months. Guided tours are available upon request but usually reserved well in advance and usually for larger groups exceeding five or more. The museum staff

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<sup>136</sup> U.S. Army, *The Casemate Museum and Fort Monroe: A Manual for Tour Guides*, rev. ed. 2013, 5-56.

and volunteers not only bring a military aspect of the history surrounding the fort but the human story as well. All contribute to the understanding of the site's rich and diverse background.

Visitors, as Ballance has already expressed, become the most important stakeholder. Though not always part of the local community, their experiences contribute to the site's existence. The museum ultimately provides an enjoyable or unsatisfactory experience. Based on their experiences, a visitor's perception can decide the future existence of the site. Considering all of the principles established by Reed, Gallardo, and Sink, their responsibility to present the site's history and collections can be indicative of social changes found throughout American culture. If, as Gallardo mentions, a museum is to connect to the community and visitors alike, a full representation must be incorporated so audiences can find a way to relate to the information being interpreted. Refer to the numbers below in the Casemate Museum's visitor attendance while under the supervision of the Department of the Army and the Casemate Museum provided by Gallardo:

2008	32,859
2009	34,897
2010	37,747
2011	34,258
2012	41,146

**Figure 1 Casemate Museum Visitor numbers under Department of the Army**

2013	35,595
2014	39,556
2015	40,999
2016	46,354
2017	47,464
2018	50,000 (projected)

**Figure 2 Casemate Museum Visitor Numbers under Fort Monroe Authority**

There are some changes in the numbers from the year 2012 to 2013 decreasing by 5,000. However, the museum saw a drastic increase from the years 2015 to the year 2016 by just over 5,000. Why the increase?

In 2016 a new exhibit was added to the museum focusing on the Contraband decision of 1861. Already mentioned in the historiography portion of this chapter, the exhibit helps in ushering new perspectives to the site’s history and narratives. This addition to the museum was facilitated in part by the NPS.<sup>137</sup> Sink phrases the partnership as a synergy with hopes of bringing education to the public. The city of Hampton has a large portion, if not a majority, of minorities as their population. The increase in visitor numbers reflects the addition of the exhibit as a direct link to the Casemate Museum and the NPS reaching out to the community so that all stories are represented. The Contraband Decision of 1861 exhibit helps build upon a national narrative through the efforts of the NPS and FMA but would not have been successful without the “desires of the community.”<sup>138</sup> A once forgotten piece of history that once became a few pages in books has now taking center stage for Fort Monroe’s interpretation and directly connects with the surrounding community.

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<sup>137</sup> R. Reed, V. Gallardo, and D. Sink, personal interview, May 24, 2018.

<sup>138</sup> *ibid*

## **Funding**

The museum and surrounding fort is free of charge. Considering the amount of effort placed into the upkeep of exhibits and professional staff, other means of revenue are taken into consideration for the operation of the museum. Reed states that there are currently four non-profit groups that contribute monetarily, two of which are non-profit foundations.<sup>139</sup> The two foundations, the Casemate Foundation and Fort Monroe Foundation assist through donations. Without their help, the way the museum conducts operations would be altered and perhaps change the dynamics of how the museum functions today. The other two contributing organizations are those that have already been mentioned such as the NPS and FMA. Cooperation between the museum's direction in its interpretations and the foundations directly affects whether financial contributions continue. In other words, if the focus of the museum is received negatively, the continued financial support could potential be in jeopardy. These foundations consist of individuals who resided within the local community and have a vested interest into how the museum conducts business as an educational and positive attribute for the community.

All of these separate entities collectively operate together through an intense and collaborative effort with the museum in an effort to interpret the site's history through a positive lens. The most important portion when considering collaboration is the multidisciplinary approach to interpretation and public history. The full-time staff of the museum consists of six members who each have a varying background. They have a Collections specialist with a background in preservation, an Educational specialist, a

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<sup>139</sup> *ibid*



Historian, and an Operations Manager with a background in Public History, an administrative assistant, as well as a Curator who has been in public history for many years and has worked in other public historical sites in the area. In addition, the FMA carries on its staff a Preservation Officer, Archaeologist, Communications specialist, and a Human Resources manager who all participate in a supporting role with the museum, all with a central goal of placing the visitor as its focus.

Reed sums up their mission best by explaining that their responsibility aligns with both the mission of the museum outlined in the MOA and MOU as well as following the wave of influence that now extends to represent women and minorities. He states that the changing perspectives and narratives is through a natural evolution and thus becomes a responsibility of the stewards charged in preserving and interpreting historical sites.<sup>140</sup> There can no longer be parallel stories surrounding separate narratives and themes. It has now become paramount to interpret the history of the site through interconnectedness.<sup>141</sup> In order for historical sites to speak about the wealthy plantation owner, they must also speak about slavery or the presentation will become sterile and lacking a full interpretation. In Fort Monroe's case, there remains the need to include the Virginia Indians, Africans, African-Americans, soldiers, and women in order for the site's history to be fully represented as well as a more inclusive interpretation presented to the public. The museum's collections and narratives surrounding the site help to shape which stories are represented. The local community and those who connect with those very same

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<sup>140</sup> ibid

<sup>141</sup> ibid

stories have likewise shaped which narratives are to be interpreted and therefore, how the history of Fort Monroe and the Casemate Museum is best understood.

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER MUSEUM

Military history is not typically viewed as a historical topic. In the past, military history has been a bit one-dimensional focusing on specific dates, events, and key individuals. John Keegan states the deficiencies of military history “is with military history itself.”<sup>142</sup> “It is, and for many writers past and present is not very much more than, the study of generals and generalship. An approach to the subject which can sometimes yield remarkable results.”<sup>143</sup> Keegan makes a compelling point in the transmissions of how difficult approaching the study of military history can be for those not in tune with the military. His own background is somewhat odd when approaching the subject such as battlefield experiences when he has never set foot on a battlefield. Keegan’s own experiences with battlefield tactics and understandings are through the classroom as an instructor with a military academy and through personal conversations with veterans who have experienced battle.<sup>144</sup> Past experiences have been flowered and portrayed as gallant efforts and actions with death and destruction often left out. The only retained information, which leaves an impression on the mind of a reader, are facts such as dates and individuals. The American Civil War helped in bringing some of the aftermaths of battle but the individual was still removed, particularly those living in the North. The conflicts in the twentieth century likewise brought the American conflicts to those on the home front but there still remained a degree of disconnection from the actual experiences of the battlefield other than through first person accounts and with the help of film. So

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<sup>142</sup> John Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, (New York: The Viking Press, 1976), 27.

<sup>143</sup> Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, 27.

<sup>144</sup> Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, 19-21.

how do historical sites and museums interpret past conflicts through cultural material for audiences who may have never set foot on a battlefield or served in the military?

Furthermore, how do local communities influence these sites in the representation of military history and past American conflicts?

This case study is unique in the sense that it greatly differs from the two previous mentioned case studies in that the museum portion of the site is entirely operated by volunteers. Considering the museum is operated through an extensive volunteer system, the museum lacks many of the assisting programs when compared to the Castillo de San Marcos and the Casemate Museum in Fort Monroe. The lack of sufficient funding considerations and the absence of an existing career staff are also two other components that hinder the process for the site in becoming a professionalized museum. The term “professional” in no way indicates the lack of individual professionalism, ability to comprehend museum practices, or the desire to produce an enjoyable museum experience. It simply means that because the museum is operated on a volunteer basis, many of the normal attributes associated with a “standard” museum are not present directly affecting the staff’s ability to operate the museum as others would with a dedicated staff, dedicated funding requirements, or academically trained public historians.

The Veterans Memorial Center and Museum is located in Brevard County on Merritt Island between Cape Canaveral and Cocoa Beach, Florida.<sup>145</sup> The opportunity to

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<sup>145</sup> My Associate Professor, Dr. Barbara Gannon, from the University of Central Florida approached me and offered a Project Manager’s position interning for the Veterans Memorial Center and Museum in Brevard County, Florida. The internship required a framework for four interactive digital screens soon to be used as exhibits (to date, they have yet to be installed). These screens would assist the interpretation of the ten American conflicts/wars represented in the museum. The staff of the museum provided a basic

conduct an internship allowed me to view a different perspective in the representation of history that examines how smaller museums and sites depend on local community assistance and therefore, local community influence. My position during the internship was Project Manager for new interactive digital exhibits that will eventually be incorporated into their museum space. These digital exhibits will help in explaining the ten American conflicts that are represented in the museum. The conflicts begin with the American Revolutionary War and end with the War on Terror providing a wide range of content for the public to grasp the significance in the cultural items displayed.

The intent behind the digital exhibits is to provide context for each conflict in the form of four sections covering a generalized timeline of significant events for each specific conflict, the conflict narrative, key individuals associated with that conflict, and stories focusing on the war on the home front. Three other components will be added at a later date covering, stories of interest, artifacts of interest, and the human cost of war. It was my job to determine the best structure for each section regarding length and format as well as editing the content with a final approval from a University of Central Florida Associate Professor. The general overview or vision for how these digital exhibits were to be utilized is through four interactive screens that allows audiences the ability to chooses which conflict and section of that conflict they would like more information on.

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layout of what they would like to have in the interactive screens for the context. During my internship, I worked closely with Becky Zingarelli to ensure the project was proceeding according to their wishes. Much of the information obtained for the use of this chapter was gained through participatory observation. When appropriate, I have footnoted certain information that was gathered during our formal interview on February 27, 2018 that may have escaped my attention during the internship or needed further clarification.

The museum originally began as a source of support to veterans beginning in 1979 with the title Veterans Memorial Center.<sup>146</sup> Donations were made from local veterans in the form of equipment, uniforms, weapons, and other materials associated with the military with the intentions to “dress the place up.”<sup>147</sup> As the years continued, so did the donations providing the volunteer staff an opportunity to expand the center into a showcase full of cultural material surrounding the American military and its past conflicts. To date, the site is separated into two sections with one continuing to operate as a memorial center and a venue for guests to rent. The other section has been converted into a museum and holds a majority of the cultural material received through donations. The area that once held the artifacts located in the memorial center section has now become a library and a place for veterans to record their experiences while serving in the military through an oral history project facilitated by the center. As the staff states, the museum “organically grew” through the support of the community and those that donated their own personal collections or military artifacts.<sup>148</sup>

An interview was conducted with the staff of the museum on February 27, 2018. Those in attendance were Dean Schaaf (President VMC / Museum Curator), Becky Zingarelli (Collections Manager / Museum Curator), William Kowalczyk (Brevard Veterans Council Memorial Plaza Chairman), and Donn Weaver (Brevard Veteran Organizations Volunteer). All are veterans. One of the first things mentioned in the interview was the title of the site itself. Zingarelli states they preferred the term Veterans Memorial Center and Museum rather than military museum because of their

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<sup>146</sup> W. Kowalczyk, D. Schaaf, D. Weaver, and B. Zingarelli, personal interview, February 27, 2018.

<sup>147</sup> *ibid*

<sup>148</sup> *ibid*

intent to represent the veterans who served in the military rather than focusing on the military itself and what inevitably is often associated with the military such as war.

Considering no historiography was examined for this particular site due to the nature of the site growing spontaneously rather than representing a specific geographical location or event that could warrant such a study, it does help for a closer examination into the use of language at historical sites and museums. In “Mind and Matter-Cultural Analysis in American Military History: A look at the State of the Field” by Wayne Lee, he summarizes Keegan as wanting “to challenge the idea that war was simply the product of the political interaction of states, fought according to rational calculations of military advantage.”<sup>149</sup> He further states that Keegan says “War embraces much more than politics...it is always an expression of culture.”<sup>150</sup> Though he criticizes Keegan’s explanation as an over simplification, he adds that this thought process helps in the investigation of “the deeper cultural assumptions informing the creation, organization, and use of armed force.”<sup>151</sup> The idea of an expression of culture is reflected throughout society in many forms. The one that relates to this case study are the items located in the Veterans Memorial Center and Museum.

Kowalczyk states that, at times, they have been accused of glorifying war by displaying the items in the museum. He further states that this does not happen too often and those that usually hold this point of view are not the ones who would be more inclined to visit the museum.<sup>152</sup> This idea of glorifying war does however bring up a

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<sup>149</sup> Wayne Lee, “Mind and Cultural Analysis in American Military History: A Look at the State of the Field,” *Journal of American History* 93 (March 2007): 1117.

<sup>150</sup> Lee, “Mind and Cultural Analysis,” 1117.

<sup>151</sup> Lee, “Mind and Cultural Analysis,” 1117.

<sup>152</sup> D. Schaaf, personal interview, February 27, 2018.

valid point. How do sites successfully negotiate opposing viewpoints of military style museums? The answer is in Zingarelli's explanation of the title for the center and museum as a "Veterans Memorial Center and Museum." This denotes two themes or ideas.

One, its focus is not on the concepts in which Keegan faults past military historians for in focusing exclusively on the actual conflicts or key individuals. The museum's focus then turns towards the actual individual who served in the military for whichever conflict is represented through their own donation or cultural material. When visitors enter the museum, there are no in-depth narratives for the conflicts explaining movements of troops, the intricate details of campaigns, or even political ramifications for such conflicts. What is presented to the audiences are articles once used in these conflicts and a connection to the individual who donated or was linked to that item. Though the future digital displays intend to present an overall narrative of the conflict, key individuals involved, and a timeline; the central focus of the museum still remains on the items linking the cultural materials to veterans.

Two, the term "memorial center" likewise denotes a remembrance or respectful representation of past deeds performed by veterans not only associated with the articles on display but all veterans. Monuments surround the site for many of the same conflicts represented by the museum. In addition, Donn Weaver mentioned that he was currently involved with planting trees along their sidewalks that takes visitors through a walking tour of their memorial park.<sup>153</sup> By linking the idea of a representation of veterans and a

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<sup>153</sup> ibid



mission of memorializing veterans, a strict term such as military museum no longer applies and a goal for glorifying war no longer present.

### **Governance**

As stated before, the museum's staff is operated through volunteers. In saying that, it makes a comparison to other museums that are fully staffed with paid professionals a bit more difficult. Some positions are covered in title such as a President/Curator, Collections Manager, and Operations Manager. The only paid position, however, is the operations manager that in no way affects the museum programs or decisions on what to display or how to interpret the items. In essence, the operations manager is responsible for overseeing the center's role as a venue for rental. A dedicated volunteer corps holds the other positions and receives no compensation. The relationship between typical roles found in other museums is also a bit tricky when comparing the site to others. They have no dedicated Education Specialist, Volunteer Coordinator, Public Historian, or any other positions usually found in professional museums. What they lack in a professional staff, however, in no way deters their attempt in interpreting veterans' service and accomplishments.

The museum's mission statement is: "The Veterans Memorial Center Museum collects, preserves and displays artifacts of the military history of the United States, with special emphasis on Brevard County veterans, in order to educate the community and inspire present and future generations with the military's service and sacrifice."<sup>154</sup>

Through a statement advertised on one of their brochures, they also state:

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<sup>154</sup> B. Zingarelli, personal interview, April 10, 2018.

Through special events like Memorial Day and Veterans Day we share stories of military service & sacrifice with the public. We also provide emergency assistance to qualifying veterans and serve as the home to 11 veteran organizations. Our Disabled American Veterans Chapter 123 is a nationally recognized group of volunteers here to assist veterans and their families with VA claims and benefits.<sup>155</sup>

Within these mission statements, the volunteer staff operates the museum while representing veterans.

Their education programs likewise fall short through a specific structured formatted tour. There are attempts, however, in expanding their program with an increase in school-aged groups wishing to include the museum as part of their curriculum and field trips.<sup>156</sup> The museum is staffed with several docents but when large groups wishing a tour of the museum enter, they are usually left to visit the museum at their leisure and with little to no interpretation from the docents of the artifacts on display.

The docents typically do not handle school tours. That's done by museum staff. We usually provide an orientation, hand out the scavenger hunt papers and pencils, then answer questions, as needed. We have hopes for eventually having age-appropriate guided tours, but we don't do that, yet. If they really want a tour, the museum staff person is able to do that.<sup>157</sup>

Another resource assisting their staff is the Museums of Brevard (MOB) organization, which they are members of, whose mission statement is:

The Museums of Brevard (MOB) is an informal confederation of interested museums and historic sites in Brevard County, Florida. Together we: advertise and promote each other's facilities both individually and jointly; share activity information and coordinate upcoming events; share best practices and lessons learned in museum administration and management, including fundraising, grant

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<sup>155</sup> D. Schaaf, personal interview, February 27, 2018.

<sup>156</sup> *ibid*

<sup>157</sup> B. Zingarelli, personal interview, April 10, 2018.

writing and collections management; and assist other members with special requests.<sup>158</sup>

Together with a professor from Eastern Florida State College with a Masters Degree in Public History, they are moving closer towards a goal of professionalization.

In addition, there is also a Board of Trustees who determines how the different forms of financial support are to be distributed. They work in conjunction with the museum staff in obtaining a mutual desired goal in order to remain in compliance with the mission statements.<sup>159</sup> One example of such cooperation is the four digital interactive screens made possible with the assistance of a monetary donation. Though the analysis of the funds received will not be explored in this section of the chapter, there is a procedure in place to determine how funds are appropriated and distributed.

### **Stakeholders**

As we have seen in the past two case studies, stakeholders contribute to each and every site directly and indirectly. This site is unique, however, because the amount of individuals involved with the operation and interpretation of the site are directly influenced and the percentage of participation from the local community far outweighs the contributing factors for the other two sites. The center and museum would literally not exist without local community involvement and influence.

One group of individuals who deserve a closer look are those that donate the artifacts displayed in the museum and library. The museum is organized through the representation of ten American conflicts ranging from the American Revolutionary War

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<sup>158</sup> *ibid*

<sup>159</sup> D. Schaaf, personal interview, February 27, 2018.

to the War on Terror. Kowalczyk states that ninety-eight to ninety-nine percent of the artifacts displayed in the museum as well as those in storage are through donations.<sup>160</sup>

There would be no artifacts if individuals and families of those individuals who once possessed the objects did not contribute in the form of donations. Schaaf does mention that some items were purchased for some of the existing exhibits in order to complete a representation of the artifact displayed. One such example is medals. If an individual donates a set of medals but missing certain devices or the medal itself that represents the individual, then that missing item would be purchased. Another such example is Sgt. York's exhibit. The museum feels that in order to complete the exhibit for the audience to connect with the individual, a rifle that was not originally Sgt. York's was purchased in order to interpret the exhibit more clearly.

Donated or purchased replicas are another example of items used in ways that do not connect with a specific conflict. The Revolutionary War era uniform found in the museum is an example. It is not an original item but becomes a representation for that conflict. Two pictures are also present in the Civil War section painted by a popular and modern military artist, Don Troiani. Again, the items are not original to the era but rather help to interpret or represent that conflict and most importantly, those that fought in the conflict. As mentioned before, these items are donations and no attempt to procure artifacts from other museums or historical sites has been attempted thus far. Do these items correctly portray each conflict if it is not originally from the era? Does this site then become nothing more than a repository of facts? These are hard concepts to gauge considering it is ultimately up to the audience to make those decisions. As Tilden,

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<sup>160</sup> *ibid*

Blackburn, and Larsen have demonstrated in their own studies, the content must connect with the visitor on a personal level through a number of techniques.<sup>161</sup> It then becomes the goal for the public historian to attempt in making that connection and perhaps enable thought provocation.

The museum likewise portrays certain conflicts more fully than others. Does this unintentionally insinuate that certain conflicts are more important than others? This also becomes a hard concept to measure but worthy of a fuller look and consideration. The World War Two section far exceeds any other conflict represented and so large that it requires a three-section area to represent an American section, European section, and Pacific section. When asked why this conflict received so much attention, the simplest answer was because World War Two veterans or their families have made the most donations.<sup>162</sup> Zingarelli further adds that because that generation is reaching the nineties age range, more and more are dying leaving their own personal collections to the museum or to their families who then donate the items to the museum.<sup>163</sup> The increased representation of the World War Two conflict and its veterans then becomes a naturally growing product rather than a singular chosen conflict to represent more fully.

A second group needing a further examination is the volunteers who spend their time to the museum. Zingarelli states that she currently has:

27 Museum docents  
11 Store staff  
10 Library staff

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<sup>161</sup> Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 1-199. Marc Blackburn, *Interpreting American Military History at Museums and Historic Sites* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 4-5; David Larsen, *Meaningful Interpretation* (Eastern National: Fort Washington, 2011), 215-224.

<sup>162</sup> D. Schaaf, personal interview, February 27, 2018.

<sup>163</sup> *ibid*

15 Duty Managers  
10 Management and support staff

Out of the individuals listed above, seventy-five to eighty percent live in the immediate area year round.<sup>164</sup> These dedicated volunteers provide much more than time for the museum's continued support but as ambassadors for visitors to the site and area. This interaction directly reflects local community influences. For example, docents interact with the public on a constant basis as they greet visitors to the museum. Zingarelli stated that they provide answers to individuals and perhaps gravitate towards a specific area of the museum that they hold either a strong connection to or a demonstrated and strong knowledge base for a specific era or conflict. Considering that there is no specific educational program established for a pre-designated tour, each individual docent adds to the interpretation for the artifacts. These individual interpretations translate into audiences receiving certain aspects of a particular conflict more thoroughly and therefore perhaps not receiving interpretations for other conflicts or events. This can be said for all sites though. Even in professionally operated museums or historical sites; docents, guides, and employees may add to or omit information pertaining to exhibits either intentionally or unintentionally. However, with no predetermined educational program, this may be even more evident at this site than others. This conclusion in no way reflects a negative aspect for audiences visiting the museum. These sets of circumstances merely reflect a stronger influence from the local community when compared to other sites and museums.

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<sup>164</sup> B. Zingarelli, personal interview, June 12, 2018.

The final group that will be analyzed are the visitor who visit the site. Again, as Todd Ballance has demonstrated, visitors become the most important stakeholders when considering community influences, historical sites, and museums.<sup>165</sup> The museum has been open since November 2016 with 20,000 guests visiting the site in 2017. They are on track to reach the same number for 2018 as well.<sup>166</sup> Considering the museum has only been open for and year and a half, they are doing well. One of the major considerations in evaluating the number of visitors in the area is that the museum is located in the heart of a popular tourist destination. Often dubbed the “Space Coast,” the area between Cape Canaveral and Cocoa Beach is a popular travel destination.<sup>167</sup> The museum is not an easily found site so the numbers do indicate that tourists are making plans to visit the site.

The site is listed in a brochure dedicated to other historical sites and tourist attractions. The continued direction that the museum is headed should exceed the 20,000 visitors goal soon.<sup>168</sup> As stated before, there appears to be a growing desire for school aged groups to visit the site as well. A continued presence on the tourist pamphlets, a desire from school groups, and an increased presence for holiday commemorations helps drive the desire for the museum to both grow its programs as well as its desire to become more professionalized as a museum. All of which helps to establish a continued and lasting presence as a representative for the local community and a location where audiences can interpret the past through the artifacts displayed.

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<sup>165</sup> T. Balance, personal interview, May 18, 2018.

<sup>166</sup> D. Schaaf, personal interview, February 27, 2018.

<sup>167</sup> D. Schaaf, personal interview, February 27, 2018.

<sup>168</sup> *ibid*

## **Funding**

Funding and financial requirements are always an interesting concept to analyze when speaking of how a museum operates. This particular site is also unique in that it receives all of its financial support through grants, donations, and fund-raising. This differs from the other two sites analyzed in this study in that the Veterans Memorial Museum receives no governmental funding through federal, state, or municipal. This indicates a strong desire for the continued existence of the site through the participation of the local community. This requirement for financial support collected by other means rather than a specified budget also indicates the museum and center relies exclusively on the local community.

The digital interactive screens are a good example of receiving money through other means in order to interpret the artifacts in the museum. The original goal was to use a grant in order to purchase the four digital screens with the University of Central Florida assisting in the grant process. Due to an untimely hurricane, the state grant was unable to be fulfilled.<sup>169</sup> Fortunately, enough donations were made in order for the digital screens to be purchased allowing for the University of Central Florida to still continue to assist the museum in its goal of interpreting the ten American conflicts into four succinct interactive exhibits. Though the university is not located in the immediate area of the site, it is only an hour away and within enough distance to support the museum on a semi-constant basis. There is, however, a satellite campus located in Cocoa Beach.

A second example that can be assessed is the use of donations by businesses as well as guests. There is a wall inscribed with business logos that makes up the entrance

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<sup>169</sup> *ibid*



to the veteran's park located across the parking lot from the museum. These inscribed advertisements thank the local organizations for contributing a donation to the center and museum. These donations, though not specified into how they were used, ultimately assist the operation of the museum. Like the inscribed advertisements, the museum is currently raising funds for the building of a Chaplin's monument dedicated on Memorial Day in 2018. Exactly how much money was used towards the monument was not examined. Regardless of the percentage used, these donations contribute towards the continued support for the museum and the surrounding park and plaza. A Board of Trustees, who meets once a month, ultimately decides in how the donations, grants, and fund raising contributions are allocated for the museum operations and projects.<sup>170</sup> This process is a collaborative effort on many voluntary levels and points to the continued local community involvement.

A more in-depth comparison between all three sites will be covered in the next chapter but one can already see the vast differences between the sites and local community influences. One of the most interesting portions of this site is its military connection. Schaaf, Zingarelli, and Kowalczyk all reiterate the connection military veterans, who either live here or once stationed in the local area, have with the center and museum. Schaaf states that they receive so many donations in the form of military artifacts, that they have no more room for them in the museum. This forces them to store the artifacts in a non-climate controlled space. Despite the fact that the improper storage of said items is another consideration for the lack of financial support or infrastructure, it

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<sup>170</sup> *ibid*

shows a continued effort to represent veterans by both accepting the artifacts as well caring for the donations.

The interpretation of military history has changed drastically in recent years. The focus has shifted from very few specific key individuals and a broad approach to war and conflicts down to a more personal level. There is no one correct way for interpretation. As the pioneers of public history state, a successful interpretation provides a sense of connection, thought provocation, and a better understanding for the themes needing further explanation. The Veterans Memorial Center and Museum approaches interpretation differently from the other two case studies but ultimately all three strive for the same goal - to reach the audience on a personal level through human stories. The Veterans Memorial Center and Museum is adapting to the environment and constraints and relies heavily on the local community for assistance. One of the major considerations for the exhibits and interpretation is not intended to glorify war. Rather, they are displayed for the preservation and memorialization for the veterans who served in past conflicts and continue to serve today. In terms of interpretation, the museum still has areas to improve in order to become more professionalized. However, their continued attempt in achieving that goal through the use of volunteers far outweighs the lack of a professionally paid staff and a standardized budget. There would be no Veterans Memorial Center and Museum without the local community.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: A COMPARATIVE EXAMINATION OF THE THREE CASE STUDIES**

The three case studies presented in this analysis all have unique characteristics. The most important responsibility historical sites and museums have is to interpret the past. In some cases, that history is often interpreted through select lenses rather than for a broadly inclusive audience. The task of representing history through the different cultures that help contribute to the overall history of a particular site often becomes confused with revisionism. In this case, revisionism is often considered a negative term and one often used by amateur historians. Thanks to the rise of cultural history in the 1990s, new perspectives are being considered and these considerations often translate through the history represented at sites that embrace an inclusive representation. These changes are reflected not only through academic standards but through local community influences as well.

This study is structured around three key components, and as such, will be compared through the same three key components. The first is through governance. This component is very different in the three case studies and is implemented through very different means. The first example found in chapter two is through the federal government and the National Park Service. The second example in chapter three is through a state agency and in partnership with the National Park Service, the City of Hampton, and the Department of the Army. The third example found in chapter four is through a corps group of volunteers with very little municipal assistance.

The second key component analyzed is the stakeholders who contribute time, effort, and money to the three sites. Again, each site is unique in their ability and types of stakeholders they associate with from the local community. Where one case study may depend greatly on stakeholders, others may not rely so heavily on the community. This makes the approach of analyzing each circumstance and the case studies that much more diverse and unique.

The third key component analyzed is the funding each site operates from. The diverse funding requirements and funds received also affects how each site contributes to programming, operational commitments in the form of upkeep for each property, and interpretation. These varying fund requirements and fund allocations greatly affect the dependency each site has with the local community and ultimately with how each site operates through governance. Each component is analyzed independently between the sites but when viewed together, all of the components contribute to an overall local community relationship with the sites that will be examined further in this chapter.

### **Governance**

The management for each site varies in levels from federal, federal / state combination, and municipal governments to a degree. Each site's governance is different as well as possessing its own unique characteristics and how the site engages with these sets of circumstances. Local community involvement with how each site is governed likewise varies in participation, ultimately affecting how interpretation is presented to the public.

The Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, as stated before, is the most established due to its affiliation with the National Government. This foundation is

evident through how the site operates through budgets, partners, and shifts in social climate changes. Its association with the federal government helps to guide how the site is operated through governance and therefore, is not altered too drastically through local community participation. Where local community influence is strongest is through the last mitigating circumstance in social changes. These foundations contribute to the overall success of the site, however, their continued success does not hinge on direct local community influence when compared to the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center and Museum. The superintendent is a paid position as well as the other park employees hired through the National Park Service. Most procedures in how the site operates are mandated through a foundation document as well as other governing policies through the Department of the Interior. These policies range anywhere from how the site is to interact with partners all the way through how each site will consider the interpretation presented to the public. These guidelines help to establish a framework in which the site will operate rather than through suggestions.

When looking at the Casemate Museum and Fort Monroe, the partnership developed through the state and federal agencies creates a unique working relationship. As such, each component has to be examined briefly on its own merits. The Casemate Museum is a part of a state operated agency. Like the Castillo de San Marcos, it too has a set of guidelines that it must follow in order to operate. The parent organization, Fort Monroe Authority, allocates a budget for the Casemate Museum to work from. In addition, the Casemate Museum and Fort Monroe Authority likewise operates through their foundation organizations as well as through a board of trustees. The Fort Monroe National Monument (the National Park Service) receives its guidelines through the same

types of foundation documents found throughout the park service and the Castillo de San Marcos. Both components operate separately through their own set of regulations as well as operated collectively in order to present a unified effort in supporting the vision of Fort Monroe as a whole. As in the Castillo de San Marcos, the local community has no direct influence in how the site is operated other than through partnerships. However, indirectly, the local community can still be viewed as becoming an influencer through the continued participation of partners as well as continued support from the foundation organizations and trustees.

The Brevard Veterans Memorial Center and Museum presents a completely different view altogether. The staff that operates the museum is operated through volunteers. There is a board of trustees who help in deciding how the site will be governed but the individuals who actually fulfill that role are all unpaid. This unique circumstance differs greatly from the other two sites. There are many avenues we could pursue to investigate further in its comparison to the other two sites but the most obvious is their lack of professional staff. Again, in saying that the museum lacks a professional staff in no way indicates their lack of individual professionalism or ability to create a professional atmosphere. Nothing could be further from the truth. However, their experience in how to operate a historic site or museum, which is apparent in the other two sites, is what is lacking. Nevertheless, their continued desire and ability to reach out to professional organizations and individuals who are experienced in Public History is what sets them apart when considering local community influences.

It was no surprise that local community influences would not have a larger role to play in the governance in two of the three sites. The Castillo de San Marcos and Fort

Monroe (the Casemate Museum and National Park Service) have policies that have already been established and operated through a professional and paid staff. The first two sites' ability to reach out to numerous resources other than the local community is plainly evident when compared to the Veterans Memorial Center and Museum. All of which ultimately translates into interpretation for public audiences.

Historical sites become centers of interests and representations of regional and national narratives, intentionally or not. Historical sites that receive governance in the form of federal support, such as the NPS, have an obligation to represent their respective community. In addition, they likewise have an obligation to connect regional narratives to national narratives. Though larger sites are not reliant on the local community as the Veterans Memorial Center and Museum, a unified goal between the site and the community is indispensable regardless of how a site is governed.

### **Stakeholders**

Where the local community's influence was not as evident in how the sites are governed, the influence through stakeholders for each site is however very apparent. Each site is affected in some manner as to how stakeholders (the local community) can assist and contribute to the interpretation of the site. Again, for the Castillo de San Marcos and Fort Monroe, there need for local community participation differs from the Veteran Memorial Center and Museum. Each site interacts with the local community differently and as such receives influences from the local community in varying degrees. This continued interaction with the local community largely depends upon what current projects are currently being considered with the site. For example, Fort Monroe is currently working

with more partners on a grander scale in order to assist them with the opening of the visitor and education center next year. The Castillo de San Marcos likewise has decided to incorporate feedback from a new partner in order to assist with an addition to their interpretation through the Seminole Indians. All of which, however, rely on the most important stakeholder of them all equally and that is through visitors.

The Castillo de San Marcos has many contributing factors to consider. Since it is the oldest and perhaps best known, it stands to reason why they would have such a developed working relationship with the community. But for the purpose of comparison, we will focus on aspects in how the local community contributes to the interpretation of the Castillo directly. The most obvious is the historic district. As we analyzed the working relationship between both in the second chapter, we discovered that each component, the Castillo and historic district, work in concert organically. When comparing the Castillo with the other two sites, there is no seamless interpretation with the larger community to date. Fort Monroe has not been established long enough as a historical park and the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center and Museum's role in the community is not intended to portray that type of interpretation with its surrounding area. One of the easiest or closest examples to compare would be Colonial Williamsburg. The city is well known for its interpretation of an eighteenth century town and its influence extends well beyond the historic area. The Castillo de San Marcos and the historic district have the ability to continue a unified interpretation creating a local community's influence much greater through its relationship with the region than Fort Monroe and the Veterans Memorial Center and Museum.



The second component to use as a comparison for the case studies would be through volunteer organizations. Each site has its own corps of volunteers and organizations that continually support each site. This one component is perhaps the single most important connection each site has with each other in relation with local community influences. As well established as the Castillo de San Marcos is, assistance is still required with its changing and continuing interpretations. Whether it is through the local reenactors and organizations that contributor through research or costumed portrayal or through the Seminole Indian Tribe's assistance, the site still receives influence from the local community. These changes in interpretation mark an interesting side note that will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

Fort Monroe likewise receives assistance through many sources of volunteers. Again, with the assistance of reenactors or groups who contribute advice as to what should be considered for the new visitors and education center, the local community influences the site directly. As Reed suggests, the site uses the narratives and cultural materials associated with the region. He also states that the local community does have some influence in what narratives will be considered. It is hard to pinpoint an exact percentage in how much influence they contribute. Perhaps the change in the historiography of the site helps us in understanding how the local community assists.

The Veterans Memorial Center and Museum relies exclusively on the local community to not only assist in the museum for visitors but through the exhibits as well. As discussed earlier in chapter four, donations make up ninety-nine percent of their exhibits emphasizing the importance in which the local community has on this site. Their local community influence far exceeds that of the other two case studies. This theme is

present throughout its involvement as a historical site or museum and gives us a comparison point from other well-established sites.

A point that can never be enforced enough is that each site is unique in its own association with their local communities. Stakeholders as a whole help retain the need for a site to exist. The one element that was not used as a comparison point is the visitors. Though each site's visitation range anywhere from 5,000 a day to 50,000 or 20,000 yearly, these visitations help make the site relevant to the public. Without visitors, there would be no need for any of the three sites to exist. Each site presents a continued need to visit and their attendance is evidence of that need. Stakeholders come in many forms and as Ballance suggests in the introduction, visitors are the most important. Their influence creates a need for historical sites and museums to continue their mission. Despite the fact that visitors are not exclusively "local", their presence helps to foster a need for progression rather than unwillingness to present newer perspectives.

Stakeholders represent society as a whole and the pulse for which social interests are important to the masses. Historiographies likewise help to gauge which social trends emerge and how history is interpreted. As mentioned, stakeholders consist in many different forms. Some have more influence over others for many different reasons. Some directly contribute to the interpretation of sites through their interactions and donations. Others influence sites through monetary contributions. Together, they represent social trends and the desire for history to become more inclusive. Historical sites ultimately depend on visitations for their continued existence. Local communities and stakeholders help in ensuring history is represented and reflective of society today.

## **Funding**

The topic of funding is probably the easiest to dissect and compare. Each site receives funds through different sources. These sources can have little to no local community influence while some are influenced by it heavily. The Castillo de San Marcos and Fort Monroe (both the NPS and FMA) are the easiest to compare due to the nature of their affiliation with larger organizations and governments. The Veterans Memorial Center and Museum however presents a far different case.

As we have seen, the first two case studies have a steady stream and forecasted budgets through the federal and state governments it is affiliated with. It is true that these budgets can vary from year to year and ultimately change given the circumstances. However, there is a reliable source of funds through a set schedule. Again these schedules could vary given the circumstances. They likewise receive donations and funds from foundations, organizations, and in one case, through visitation entrance fees. All of which provide a very deep pocket when compared to the Veterans Memorial Center and Museum.

Some points to consider is how local communities could contribute to funding indirectly can come in many forms. In essence, voters could elect representatives who would lobby for continued support for sites such as these but in this analysis, this consideration is a far stretch given the scope. Local community influences in the form of foundations likewise present other alternatives for influence. But again, continued support from these foundations will not likely subside. True, funding may vary from year to year or even within the year depending on how often foundations choose individuals to represent their organizations. This continued support likewise could depend on how

these sites are being operated or influenced by the site's representation of the past through its narratives and themes. In other words, the possibility of withholding funds could directly contribute to a lack of ability to interpret the history surrounding the site. The probabilities of withholding funds due to these circumstances are both immoral and unethical. This potential situation was not evident in any of the three case studies but a future consideration worth noting when approaching this topic while discussing other sites.

The Veterans Memorial Center and Museum, however, relies heavily on community influences that directly contribute to the interpretation of the site. Take for instance the digital exhibits I assisted them with in 2017. If they had not received the money through donations from the local community, the digital screens would not have been purchased due to their anticipated grant never materializing with the State of Florida. Their exhibits likewise would not exist if donations were not made from the local community creating a very different museum space. The all-volunteer staff also helps to exemplify the point of funds directly contributing to local community influence, or in this case, the lack of funds. Without a consistent budget, the museum is forced to rely on the individuals who operate the museum directly contributing to the interpretation of the site. Without a volunteer staff, there would be no museum.

As complicated as budgets can be, in the case of local community influences in this analysis, the question of involvement can be briefly summarized. The larger the budget, the less local communities become involved directly with the funds allocated for the operation of the site translating to interpretation. If a site has a reliable budget, a need for public support no longer becomes necessary. Take for instance the National Parks.

Funding is decided through a national budget and filtered down through the government agencies and ultimately into the hands of the individual parks. If an exhibit displaying the complexities of the African Slave Trade is the goal of an individual park, local community support through the allocation of funds is not needed. However, continued support from the local community or even through visitors may still be important in the form of visits to the park. Should visits decrease because of a certain exhibit, the future of that park's funding requirements could be affected in the future. Though local community or stakeholder influence does not directly affect the budget immediately, an indirect affect of not supporting a park's exhibit will exist. In the case of the Veterans Memorial Center and Museum, local community and stakeholder influence will be immediate.

Analyzing the three cases studies through these three components has demonstrated a wide and varying degree of local community involvement. These components likewise direct our attention to one aspect that was not fully developed but needs further attention and perhaps, a more in-depth analysis in the future. This one component can be viewed as the catalyst that helps to generate local community influence as well as interests in sites such as these. This one component is best viewed through the historiographies of the sites.

### **Changes in Historiography and Progression**

Two out of the three case studies present themes that deserve a unique perspective when referring to local community influences. The Brevard Veterans Memorial Center and Museum, which relies heavily on local community influence when it comes to interpretation, differs when speaking of historiographies and how interpretation has changed. It is true that perspectives have changed over the years when referring to the military and its veterans. The Vietnam War provides such an instance. American society has reacted differently towards veterans when compared to how they were treated during and after the American conflict in Vietnam. The initial intent behind the exhibits is somewhat more straightforward as well. The artifacts displayed represent equipment and stories about individuals who either used or inherited these items. In other words, the museum has become a repository of artifacts for now, a far different course than the Castillo de San Marcos and Fort Monroe.

The changing of historiography can be marked through the transitions of societal dynamics. One of the most obvious examples is at the Castillo de San Marcos when Roberts said the interpreters were not qualified or comfortable when speaking about the Native American experience in the past. Now that cultural history has become forefront among public history sites, it becomes imperative to represent every culture associated with historical significance with the site. Deferring to not answering questions about a specific culture or group of people because the interpreter is uncomfortable or lacking knowledge is no longer acceptable as society influences how history is represented. Roberts' own acknowledgement of seeking assistance from the Seminole Indian Tribes of today demonstrates local community influences very well. Not only does this example

demonstrate but also directly represents a local community influence in interpretation. The Castillo de San Marcos now becomes a site that includes all perspectives of history rather than a Eurocentric viewpoint. A need to expand on Civil Rights protests in Saint Augustine equally helps to exemplify why there remains a need to expand the scope of interpretation that a site must consider when working with local communities and visitors.

Fort Monroe likewise demonstrates changes to interpretation based off of societal changes that spawn from local community influences. Take for example the Casemate Museum. The first exhibit established in the museum was that of Jefferson Davis' prison cell after the American Civil War. Now it has expanded to include Native American influences, African influences, African American influences, and women's influences. The site has become more inclusive for all cultures and genders associated with the site through historical content. Their own inclusion of the Contraband Decision of 1861 helps to bring relevance to the site where some may have felt alienated in the past when trying to make a connection with the site. An emphasis of the first arrival of Africans in an English North American colony also reflects a need to connect with all races and cultures of society. These narratives would not have been present in the 1950s due to the climate of racial divisions in America.

Historiographies help us track these changes and a quick description of how these historiographies have altered was given in their respective chapter. The one thing these historiographies demonstrate is a change in how history has been represented through academia for the regions and sites associated with the two case studies. These shifts in literature likewise correspond with changes in American society. There was no positive

emphasis placed on the different cultures associated with each site and nearly absent with regards to Fort Monroe. Changes in society have no doubt assisted in these representations with the Civil Rights movement as well as the rise in cultural history in 1990s. These changes propel local community influences on these sites through direct and indirect actions. In the past, marginalized cultures and races had no voice in the representation of their own history. Now, pressure and lack of interest for public historical sites as a whole have forced these institutions all over the United States to reconsider their approach to interpreting their site. It is within this vein that the local community greatly affects the interpretation of a site and perhaps, determines the success of the historical site or museum.

The three components, along with the tracking of historiographical shifts, examined in this study are only a few amongst a dozen more contributing factors. As we have seen, local community influences range anywhere from little impact to a large contributing factor when looking at each component separately. Collectively, the amount of influence placed on each site likewise ranges from some to a greater amount of assistance. One of the major conclusions based off of these three case studies is that the larger the institution, the less they rely on local community assistance. However, no matter the size of the institution, there still remains a constant presence of local community involvement and influence.



## CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

The three case studies presented in this analysis vary in many regards from the content that connects them to the past to the way each site is operated. As we have learned, interpretation explains the narratives a historic site or museum choose to represent an event or place for the public to better understand the themes, historical significance, or importance of what transpired at the site being visited. Local communities play an essential role in this process. Though the relationships each site has with its local community is represented through varying degrees, the influence of local communities is present at each site affecting the way audiences receive information.

There are a couple of things to consider when exploring the notions of local community influences on interpretation. Three themes emerge from this study. The first is that local communities are not equally influential at each site. The longer the site has been established and larger the organization that operates the site is, the less they depend on local community assistance in interpretation. This is not to say that no considerations are given towards interpretation without local community assistance or feedback. This merely suggests that each site varies in the percentage in which the local community assists with the interpretation.

The Castillo de San Marcos has been the longest established between the three case studies. Their framework and developed programming has well been established. They are a part of the National Park Service, which governs their operations. However, some assistance is received from the local community through its changed perspectives, themes, and narratives, which incorporate all cultures represented within this site. The

Brevard Veterans Memorial Center and Museum however differs greatly. Their interpretation almost exclusively comes from the local community as well as their daily operations, which can coincide with interpretation as well. Fort Monroe presents a different aspect. They have a combination and different support systems all together with local community influences on interpretation affecting the site differently from the other two.

Another theme that surfaced during this analysis is that there are many mitigating components that are affected by the local community in relation to interpretation. In spite of three components being analyzed, many more surfaced that deserve a further exploration in the future. One such example is through foundations and boards of trustees. Though briefly mentioned in the stakeholder's section of each chapter, not enough information was gathered from the three sites as to their exact relationship, and rightfully so. To investigate further into the exact relationship the site has with its foundations or trustees would be to uncover exactly how their funds are appropriated. Yes, public meetings are conducted so that funds are discussed openly. But what happens behind closed-door meetings? Are funds withheld if a site does not meet the expectation of the board of trustees or foundations? This in no way suggests that this is occurring with any of the three sites but it is worth noting that a further examination could be pursued. Another avenue that could be pursued is how much the local community affects a site that has a stronger government support system from those that do not. Can one be influenced more heavily because they lack a dedicated budget? Again, not to suggest that this is occurring at any of the sites but a theme that could possibly be pursued in the future.

Lastly, the third theme that emerges is that these changes in interpretations coincide with the development of cultural history and changes in social dynamics. In short, marginalized populations from the past now have a voice in what will be represented in museums and historical sites. Some call this revisionist history and others, a needed change. From the three case studies, there were no indications that the histories of the sites were being fabricated. The changes to the interpretation reflect society's wishes to become more inclusive within the story of America. This theme needs to be developed further and a more in-depth look into the historiography of public history as a whole must also be further explored to frame how public history has developed in recent years when compared to the past. These case studies help to demonstrate how narratives and perspectives are gaining a new approach with Fort Monroe standing at the forefront due to its new status as a large historical site and the unveiling of their education and visitors center in 2019.

All three case studies exemplify a change in the approach to public history and how interpretation evolves. The evolution of America's story has changed dramatically over the decades and questions have arisen as to what direction will public historical sites proceed. Some say that the target age of public historical sites are above the age fifty-five and therefore, programs are tailored to that age group. Others may suggest the reason the most popular ages are above fifty-five is because of the programs. This becomes a circular argument and the end result is that public historical sites are on the cusp of either altering how they reach newer audiences or suffer from lack of attendance.

Local communities are helping to shape this changed approach in representing the past through interpretation and different partners are being consulted for these future

developments. Another theme not necessarily discovered in this thesis but worth noting is that these sites become an extension of the local community. The partners who work with these sites are from the local community and in their own respect, ambassadors of the community and region. To not consult these partners would make representing the history of that site, city, or region, extremely difficult. In all the case studies, the one commonality is that the communities these sites belong to are proud to be associated with them and the direction they are headed. There must be an interest from the public in order for any historical site or museum to succeed and remain relevant. The local community, regardless of the size or support the site has, affects changes to interpretation. To disregard local community influences would be to ignore the very fabric of what makes a public historical site relevant to society.

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