

ABSTRACT

Past vs President:
Interpretation and Public Approval at the George W. Bush Presidential Library

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Presidential libraries are institutions not wholly public nor completely private. Their distinct structure has inspired a body of work which paints these centers as presidential temples, sites of self-commemoration, memory, and biased history. Biased interpretations can have many consequences especially in regard to the assumed trustworthiness of museums in America. Consequently, this thesis explores this idea of commemoration via the lens of museum studies. Using the George W. Bush library in Dallas, Texas as a case study, this research examines interpretation of events correlated to particularly low points of public approval for the former president within the museum galleries to determine if this bias is present in the most recent presidential library to join NARA.

Past vs. President: Interpretation and Public Approval at the George W. Bush Presidential Library

by

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A Thesis

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I could not have done any of this without the love and kindness of my family, especially my mother. You have been such a generous supporter of me throughout all of my academic pursuits. I hope you find this final body of work worthy of all of your sacrifices.

DEDICATION

For Doug and Tricia. This is all possible because of you.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

“A charge to keep I have...To serve the present age, my calling to fulfill, O may it
all my pow'rs engage to do my Master's will”

-A Charge to Keep I Have, Charles Wesley

In the days leading up to the opening of his presidential library, George W. Bush took one last walk through the museum before the galleries would open to the public. On this review, he commented to staff about the absence of a gift he received from Tanzanian President, Jakaya Kikwete. This gift was a taxidermy lion, standing as tall as President Bush's shoulders. The lion was not a part of the original design of the galleries, but upon the president's request, room was made, and the lion found his new home (Figure 1.1). When guests walk through the George W. Bush Presidential Library now, they may be surprised to see a life size taxidermy lion in the middle of a gallery named, *Acting with Compassion*, but it was what the president wanted. This anecdote was relayed by two staff members of the George W. Bush Presidential Library. While they were not there on the day President Bush made his request, they are keenly aware of how the presidential presence influences their work.

Presidential libraries are institutions distinct in their structure and governance. In 1939 Franklin D. Roosevelt donated his papers, land, and other memorabilia from his time in office to the United States National Archives Records Administration (NARA) to

create and administer what became the first presidential library.¹ Due to budget and structural changes, the Presidential Libraries Act of 1955 declared that NARA would no longer fund the creation of libraries, due to their surmounting costs. NARA operates and maintains the archives and libraries once the initial building and development is complete. Since 1955, presidents have assumed the responsibility for assembling the library development committee. This committee is responsible for fundraising and developing the initial exhibits. In some cases, the president himself will even have final say or involvement in the development as well.

Museums are generally viewed as reliable institutions by the public. Guests expect the museums they visit share reliable and accurate information. According to the American Alliance of Museums, history museums rank as the most trustworthy source among newspapers and nonprofit researchers, while the US government ranked among the lowest.² Presidential libraries are a unique marriage of government and museums, so how does their trustworthiness compare to traditional history museums?

A 2017 article from Gallup, a global analytic firm that tracks presidential approval, found that former President George W. Bush is popular in public approval in retirement. In 2008 when President Bush left office, he had a public approval rating of only 35%, but a Gallup poll from the article found that his favorability rose to 59% since

¹ “Presidential Library History.” National Archives and Records Administration. National Archives and Records Administration. Accessed November 20, 2019. <https://www.archives.gov/presidential-libraries/about/history.html>.

² American Alliance of Museums. “Museums: Did You Know?” <https://www.michiganmuseums.org/resources/Documents/Infographic%20AAM.pdf>

leaving office.³ This rise in public approval could be the result of his public love of painting, his relationship with his father, the late President George H. W. Bush, his friendly relationship with the Obama family, or even his tendency to stay out of the political conversation. No matter the reason for the spike, this rise in public approval is a trend we see for many presidents after they leave office. Society's relationships with presidents change. New leaders are sworn in, and often times removal from an administration allows passions to cool and citizens to develop new feelings. An institution that has a large influence on our new feelings towards the former presidents is the system of presidential libraries.



Figure 1.1 Taxidermy Lion given as a gift to George W. Bush by Tanzanian President, Jakaya Kikwete

³ Gallup, Inc. (2008, April 11). George W. Bush and Barack Obama Both Popular in Retirement. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/212633/george-bush-barack-obama-popular-retirement.aspx>.

Using the George W. Bush Presidential Library (GWBPL) as a case study, I evaluated the trustworthiness of presidential libraries. I chose two crises occurring near the end of Bush's presidency which appeared to be isolated events with a clear cause: Hurricane Katrina and the financial crisis. Both events received widespread coverage and happened during the lowest period of public approval. I expected to find that interpretive language used at the GWBPL would be more favorable toward the president than primary sources. When I compared the media coverage of these two events with the interpretive language used in the exhibits at the GWBPL, I found the exhibits did not overtly favor the president in their interpretation of these events.

Definitions

In the interest of having a shared and understood language, the following are definitions of terms I will use throughout the rest of this thesis.

Interpretation

Interpretation is crucial to this research of exhibits at the GWBPL. Interpretation has a rich history in museums, beginning with Freeman Tilden in 1957. Often referred to as the father of interpretation, Tilden defined 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 to simply communicate factual information."⁴ Over time, as the museum studies field has evolved, more definitions of interpretation are accepted and circulated. One popular definition comes from the

⁴ Tilden, Freeman, R. Bruce. Craig, and Russell E. Dickenson. *Interpreting Our Heritage* 4th ed., expanded and updated. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.

National Association of Interpretation. This definition states that interpretation is: “a mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audiences and meanings inherent in the resource.”⁵ This is the definition I subscribe to in my work.

Public Approval

Public approval is an understanding of the public’s view of a president’s job ability. Public approval ratings can be used in a variety of research in the field of political science but can also be used internally in the president’s office. Approval ratings may influence a president’s policy decisions or even whether to run for a second term. Gallup defines public approval as a “simple, yet powerful, measure of the public's view of the U.S. president's job performance at a particular point in time.”⁶ Throughout this research, the data used to analyze and understand George W. Bush’s public approval comes from Gallup. Using both a definition of public approval as well as data from the same source will ensure proper understanding of the data.

Presidential Library

Presidential libraries and their governance, structure, and organization are complex and can be difficult to understand. Rather than a traditional museum or library,

⁵ “What Is Interpretation?” What is Interpretation. National Association for Interpretation. Accessed November 20, 2019. https://www.interpnet.com/NAI/interp/About/About_Interpretation/nai/_About/what_is_interp.aspx?hkey=53b0bfb4-74a6-4cfc-8379-1d55847c2cb9.

⁶ Gallup, Inc. “Presidential Job Approval Center.” Gallup.com. Gallup, November 11, 2019. <https://news.gallup.com/interactives/185273/presidential-job-approval-center.aspx>.

they are a combination of both, and run by a combination of staffs. The best definition comes from the government organization that oversees these institutions, NARA:

Presidential Libraries are archives and museums, bringing together the documents and artifacts of a President and his administration and presenting them to the public for study and discussion without regard for political considerations or affiliations. Presidential Libraries and Museums, like their holdings, belong to the American People.⁷

Conclusion

This thesis will explore how primary source media coverage of these two events during George W. Bush's presidency compares with the interpretation of the same events at the GWBPL. What are the focuses of the coverage? What is omitted? What is the style of writing? Chapter two explores the related literature in a variety of fields: presidential libraries and their history, museum studies, and public approval. Chapter three is an overview of my methodology and a look into my visit to the GWBPL. Chapter four presents the data and analyzes it to better understand the interpretation of events in the museum. The final chapter explores what the findings mean for presidential libraries and how this information can be used in the future to inform further studies.

⁷ "Learn about Presidential Libraries." National Archives and Records Administration. National Archives and Records Administration. Accessed November 20, 2019. <https://www.archives.gov/presidential-libraries/about>

CHAPTER TWO

The Literature

Presidential libraries are museums of memory. As memorials to living presidents, the ‘history’ interpreted within the walls of libraries is lived experience and influenced by the president and the team who develops the library, museum, and its exhibitions.

Libraries exist to interpret a powerful figure, and they do so under the leadership of a committee selected by the president himself and with the financial support of a private foundation.¹ This unique relationship between developer and subject may cause an imbalance in the research and development of the initial exhibits. This imbalance creates centers that are described by Professor Benjamin Hufbauer as “Presidential Temples.”² Hufbauer does not discuss what this means for exhibition interpretation in the gallery. The literature of presidential libraries discusses the bias that can occur when private foundations are involved, but I have yet to see data-drive studies in these “presidential temples.”

If presidential libraries are going to continue to exist in their current state, it is important to determine if they are truly the fair and balanced institutions that visitors have come to expect from history museums. In addition to determining if there is an overt bias, it is necessary to explore the educational theories that apply to presidential libraries. This

¹ Craig, R. Bruce. "Presidential Libraries and Museums: Opportunities for Genuine Reform." *The Public Historian* 28, no. 4 (2006): 75-84.

² Hufbauer, B. (2006). *Presidential temples: How memorials and libraries shape public memory*. Lawrence, Kan.: Univ. Press of Kansas.

requires an understanding of educational theories in popular practice in museums at this time. In addition to understanding educational theories, this research requires an interdisciplinary understanding of literature across fields from President Bush's time in office, the presidential library system, presidential approval ratings, and museum studies specifically museum education, interpretation, and exhibits.



Figure 2.1 Infographic from the American Alliance of Museums

Presidential Libraries

Since George Washington's presidency, there has been an interest in the study of our presidents. However, there were no standards for the preservation of related materials. Presidents took their papers with them after they left office, considering them to be their personal property, thus the preservation of any presidential materials was serendipitous. Papers were sold, destroyed, or lost.³ The first institution in America that bears resemblance to what we now consider a presidential library, was the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center, dedicated to the public in 1916.⁴ But these institutions and the encouragement to donate papers to the National Archives was not formalized until the first presidential library was created in 1939 by President Roosevelt.

In 1939, President Roosevelt donated a portion of his Hyde Park estate while friends of the president donated the funds needed to construct the building. Roosevelt was inspired by the Hayes Center, but wanted his library to be more than a center of memorial or commemoration. He understood the importance of presidential history and was aware of the way his presidency had changed American politics forever.⁵ He modeled his idea for a presidential library after Andrew Mellon's National Gallery of Art, in the regard that would be privately constructed and federally operated. Even after his death, Roosevelt wanted to maintain control over the library. To ensure this, he intentionally

³ Wilson, Don W. "Presidential Libraries: Developing to Maturity" *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (1991), 771-779

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

selected the staff in charge.⁶ In order for the museum to justify federal funding, FDR knew that government activity “required a coalition of groups who will benefit and will therefore lend political support.”⁷

In 1955, Congress passed the Presidential Libraries Act with bipartisan support. This act gave the National Archives the authority to “accept papers, artifacts, lands, and buildings in collection with the establishment of presidential libraries.”⁸ These items become the property of the National Archives and are made available to the public to use for research, usually six to seven years after the president has left office. In addition to collecting papers and artifacts in correspondence with the presidency, libraries often act as a repository for the first family.⁹ Close relationships with the former president extend beyond object collection and storage and into the financial support and day to day operations of the libraries. Author Sharon Fawcett describes these institutions as “public-private partnerships.”¹⁰

The development of presidential libraries are completed by the donors, supporters, and committees close to and chosen by the president.¹¹ Once the libraries are completed,

⁶ Hufbauer, B. (2006). *Presidential temples: How memorials and libraries shape public memory*. Lawrence, Kan.: Univ. Press of Kansas.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Wilson, Don W. “Presidential Libraries: Developing to Maturity” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (1991), 771-779.

⁹ Christina Oliver, Kelly Seufert, Interview by author, Dallas, TX, September 20, 2019.

¹⁰ Fawcett, Sharon K. "Presidential Libraries: A View from the Center." *The Public Historian* 28, no. 3 (2006).

¹¹ Hufbauer, B. (2006). Spotlights and Shadows: Presidents and Their Administrations in Presidential Museum Exhibits. *The Public Historian*, 28(3), 117-132.

foundations continue to maintain some control over the day to day operations of the museum, including programming and events.¹² Much of the literature discusses how this initial creation, completed by those closest to the president, often leads to a lack of balance and diversity of perspective in research and development.¹³ Presidential library scholar Benjamin Hufbauer describes this phenomenon in a 2006 article, “In my view, and in the view of many others, a characterization that presidential library exhibits for the most part are ‘noncontroversial’ or that they represent any kind of ‘consensus’ by historians, is incorrect.”¹⁴ Hufbauer even goes so far as to describe the institutions as “closer to being political propaganda.”¹⁵ Others have a different view. Author Don Wilson sees presidential libraries as more than commemorative museums, but rather “classrooms of democracy.”¹⁶ Despite differences in opinion, all presidential libraries give the visitor a similar experience. Visitors can expect to be taken, usually chronologically, through a president’s life, from childhood to their path to the presidency, term or terms, family, and life after office.

Visitors to presidential libraries often come to these institutions to honor the memory of the president and to have their assumptions validated. In his book *Presidential*

¹² Hufbauer, B. (2006). Spotlights and Shadows: Presidents and Their Administrations in Presidential Museum Exhibits. *The Public Historian*, 28(3), 117-132.

¹³ Craig, R. Bruce. "Presidential Libraries and Museums: Opportunities for Genuine Reform." *The Public Historian* 28, no. 4 (2006): 75-84.

¹⁴ Hufbauer, Benjamin. "Is There “Noncontroversial” History at Presidential Libraries?" *The Public Historian* 28, no. 4 (2006): 85-86.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Wilson, Don W. “Presidential Libraries: Developing to Maturity” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (1991), 771-779.

Temples, Hufbauer discusses the Harry S. Truman Library's redevelopment and evolution of their exhibits over time. The original exhibits represented what Hufbauer calls "the first lifecycle of a presidential library."¹⁷ Those responsible for funding the initial exhibits are often close to the president and almost never want to see an exhibit that interprets problematic areas of the presidency.¹⁸ In time, leadership at the Truman Library saw a need to redevelop their exhibits. This change was the result of an increase in funding, and the determination of the staff to react positively to change. Staff also recognized that the whole institution of presidential libraries needs a fresh approach.

Another factor that may contribute to redevelopment in a presidential library is the disappearance of a president from public memory. In the early 1990s, under new leadership, the Roosevelt Library discovered younger visitors, who had no living memory of the former president, were not interacting with the exhibits as strongly as older visitors. Staff realized they needed more interactive components to draw in these younger visitors and so they developed a simulation game that allowed visitors to make decisions as if they *were* the president.¹⁹ This interactive experience can now be seen at a variety of other presidential libraries across the country, including the library that serves as the case study for this research, the George W. Bush Presidential Library.

The history of presidential libraries and their governance is long and complex. They are institutions that are not entirely federal while also not being entirely private.

¹⁷Hufbauer, B. (2006). *Presidential temples: How memorials and libraries shape public memory*. Lawrence, Kan.: Univ. Press of Kansas.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

They report to both the federal government and private donors or foundations. Many libraries interpret a political figure who is still active in society and who often has a strong relationship with the institution. This distinct structure makes presidential libraries unlike other informal learning institutions and provides an unparalleled opportunity to interpret political history. The question becomes, how does all of this influence the way presidential libraries present themselves to the public? How do these circumstances affect interpretation of events and history within the exhibits? Can traditional museum educational practices and understandings apply to these hybrid institutions?

Museum Studies

Museums have, in their history been viewed as temples. In his article, *The Museum: Temple or Forum*, Duncan Cameron discusses this transition.²⁰ Previously centers for the elite to go, socialize, and enjoy art or marvel at cabinets full of curios, museums have transformed into forums for the public. Places where all are welcome to explore science, history, art, culture, and more. Museums were forced to make this shift due to changing tax laws, requiring that museums become educational institutions. This shift inspired a field of museum studies educational theories that changed the landscape of American museums. Presidential libraries tend to still operate in a way that is reminiscent of this past, as temples or shrines to the former president.

While many museums now tackle the challenge of interpreting modern everyday stories,²¹ history museums do not suffer from the same trend of self-commemoration that

²⁰ Cameron, Duncan. "The Museum: a Temple or the Forum." *Cahiers d'Histoire Mondiale/Journal of World History/Cuadernos de Historia Mundial* 14, no. 1 (January 1, 1972).

²¹ Amy Henderson and Adrienne L. Kaeppler, eds. (1997). *Exhibiting Dilemmas: Issues of Representation at the Smithsonian*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press

happens at presidential libraries.²² In history museums, curators tell stories that are part of the human experience, but often without the partisan influence of a presidential library. Despite the difference in development at presidential libraries, I believe the presidential museums found within these libraries engage visitors in the same way that many other museums do. The first of these ways is through interpretation.

Interpretation happens at the George W. Bush library through exhibit text, short videos, interactive experiences, and exhibit design. These components may overlap in the eyes of the visitor, but all work independently to influence the experience.

In 1957 Freeman Tilden established principles for interpretation that are still used by the National Park Service today.²³ These six principles are:

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
2. Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.
3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.
4. The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.
5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.
6. Interpretation addressed to children (say up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.

These principles have influenced other writing in the field of museum education and interpretation. Sam Ham's 2013 book, *Interpretation: Making a Difference on*

²² Hufbauer, B. (2006). Spotlights and Shadows: Presidents and Their Administrations in Presidential Museum Exhibits. *The Public Historian*, 28(3), 117-132.

²³ "Tilden's Six Principles." National Parks Service. U.S. Department of the Interior, May 2, 2018. <https://mylearning.nps.gov/library-resources/tildens-six-principles-ace/>.

Purpose, elaborates on Tilden’s six principles. Ham organizes Tilden’s principles into a framework that is easy for educators to remember and explains how museums and other sites can use it in a variety of ways. Ham’s TORE model states that in order for interpretation to be successful it must have a Theme, be Organized, be Relevant to the audience, and be Enjoyable.²⁴ Ham claims this model of interpretation can be used to lead to appreciative attitudes, “Often interpretation strives to leave its audiences with an appreciation or positive evaluation of something. This ‘something’ might be the organization or agency that manages the place, but it almost always includes appreciation of the things that were interpreted.”²⁵ This is particularly relevant in the case of this research. At the George W. Bush Presidential Library, the organization (The Bush Institute) and the ‘thing’ interpreted (Bush’s presidency) share a common goal. Ham examines whether this goal of interpretation can be successful. He finds that when interpretation is intentional and targeted to impact an audience’s beliefs it is possible for a change in appreciation or attitude to occur.

Interpretation takes place in museums through a variety of mediums, including exhibition text and design. Beverly Serrell, author of *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach* describes interpretive labels as: “Tell stories; they are narratives, not lists of facts. Any label that serves to explain, guide, question, inform, or provoke in a way that invites participation by the reader – is interpretive.”²⁶ Interpretive labels are a part of

²⁴ Ham, Sam H. (2013) *Interpretation: Making a Difference on Purpose*. Golden: Fulcrum Publishing.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Serrell, Beverly. (2015) *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach*. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield.

larger interpretive exhibits that tell stories, present issues, or strive to change visitors' attitudes. Not all labels are interpretive but Serrell discusses that interpretive labels will address visitors' concerns about what is in it for them and why they should care. Serrell also discusses how Tilden's principles of interpretation can be applied to exhibit text, by having a big idea, keeping things focused, and to think about visitor's shared needs.²⁷ Interpretive labels tell short and meaningful stories in a variety of settings and types of exhibits. In creating interpretive exhibit labels, it is important to be aware of audience, learning styles, reading levels, and languages.²⁸ Labels are only a small part of the visitor experience. Exhibit design and the sum of all design components also change the way visitors interact with and learn from a space.²⁹

In their book, *Creating Exhibitions*, authors Polly McKenna-Cress and Janet Kamien define exhibition design as, "Spatial problem solving to create elegant, meaningful experiences for diverse public audiences."³⁰ In order for exhibits to be successful, they must serve the content as well as the needs of the visitors. The authors discuss elements of interactive exhibit design that are particularly successful. The first of these exhibit design elements is the opportunity for visitors to do something they are unable to do in their normal environment. In some cases, exhibits give visitors an actual authentic experience, in other cases, it is a simulated experience. The Decision Points

²⁷ Serrell, Beverly. (2015) *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach*. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ McKenna-Cress, P. & Kamien J. (2013) *Creating Exhibitions: Collaborating in the Planning, Development, and Design of Innovative Experiences*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

³⁰ Ibid.

Theater (DPT) at the GWBPL gives visitors the opportunity to participate in a simulation of presidential decision making. This opportunity for visitors is one they would not have otherwise and while it is not authentic, I believe it still has a similar effect. The second discussed method of exhibit design is immersive environments. These immersive environments are described in the text as being natural places, recreated through a combination of sensory factors. McKenna-Cress and Kamien claim immersive spaces stir a sense of wonder in the visitor.³¹ The third element is an exhibit's capability to invoke emotions in the visitor. Exhibits may strive to invoke authentic emotion in the visitors to create transformative experiences. An example given in the text to support this design component is the United States Holocaust Museum. Through exhibits that tell emotional, human stories, visitors feel a strong sense of authentic emotion that creates a strong transformative experience.³² The GWBPL strives to incorporate these design components into the permanent exhibits in the gallery.

These components combine to create an experience that McKenna-Cress and Kamien describe as gestalt. Visitors experience the exhibit as being a sum of the parts which make it up. While most of these parts are sensory experiences, things visitors can touch, see, or even smells, the main sense used in exhibitions is the visual perception. This sense is comprised of sightlines, colors in the gallery, lighting and more. While sensory experiences can be useful for providing memorable experiences, it is important not to overwhelm. The authors discuss models of exhibits that use sensory experiences and

³¹ McKenna-Cress, P. & Kamien J. (2013) *Creating Exhibitions: Collaborating in the Planning, Development, and Design of Innovative Experiences*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

³² Ibid.

intentional design to tell a story. One model they discuss is the Immersive Theatrical Environment.³³

An Immersive Theatrical Environment is experienced at the visitors own pace and open to an adjacent space. This model best describes the experience of the Decision Points Theater. In these experiences visitors are immersed with video, a musical score, voices, text, and interactive components. Visitors are connected physically and emotionally to the historical moments or stories being interpreted.³⁴

Museum studies literature spans beyond the technical approach of interpretation, exhibit text, or design. There is a wide body of museum education literature concerning the visitor experience, educational and learning theory, and how social and personal identity affect a visitor's experience. Falk and Dierking explore this idea in their body of work, beginning with their 1992 book, *The Museum Experience*. The authors describe how visitors come to the museum with their own personal agenda, they come with "a set of expectations and anticipated outcomes for the visit."³⁵ These differences in agendas can predict differences in behavior or learning. It could be assumed that most visitors who come to a presidential library have a political opinion about the president in question. This opinion may be based on political affiliation, living memory, or personal experiences, but it is important to recognize that visitors may come into libraries with strong emotions,

³³ McKenna-Cress, P. & Kamien J. (2013) *Creating Exhibitions: Collaborating in the Planning, Development, and Design of Innovative Experiences*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Falk, J. & Dierking, L. (1992). *The Museum Experience*. Washington, DC: Whalesback Books.

which will affect their experience. Falk and Dierking also note that museums are places visitors enter of their own volition.³⁶

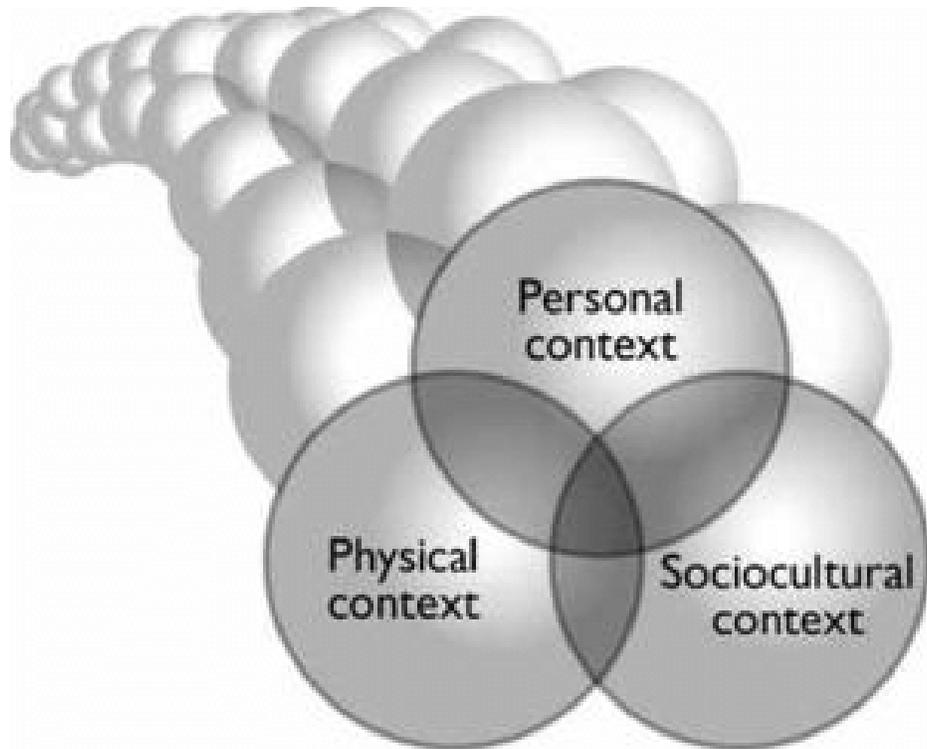


Figure 2.2 Falk and Dierking's Contextual Model of Learning

These visits may be social or educational experiences, but Falk and Dierking understand the museum experience through their contextual model (Figure 2.2). This contextual model of learning describes three contexts: the personal, the social, and the physical within the context of time.³⁷ The personal context is unique to each individual and is influenced by their life. It includes their experience with museums, knowledge about the content, interests, motivations, and any concerns. This context is where political

³⁶ Falk, J. & Dierking, L. (1992). *The Museum Experience*. Washington, DC: Whalesback Books.

³⁷ Ibid.

beliefs exist. The second context is social. Many visitors come to the museum in a social setting, visiting with friends or family as a leisure time activity. A guest's visit to the museum is heavily influenced by their social group, if they are visiting with a group of small children or well-educated adults their visit will look very different. The final context is the physical. The physical context contains the design and feel of exhibits as well as the accessibility. A visitor's physical context may determine how long they are willing to spend in a museum.³⁸

In the continuation of this research in *The Museum Experience Revisited*, Falk and Dierking explore how the physical context specifically directs how visitors interact with exhibits. The authors discuss how visitors actively select which exhibitions to visit and then, within the exhibit which elements to interact with.³⁹ This selection of interaction gives the visitor a hand in creating the physical context for themselves.

As discussed earlier in the chapter, exhibit labels are a crucial part of storytelling within a museum. It is important to recognize how these exhibit labels are used by the visitors in order to discuss how well they are doing their job. Falk and Dierking report that, "all visitors read some labels; no visitor reads all of them."⁴⁰ While there have been many visitor studies done to attempt to answer the question of how long visitors spend reading labels, there are too many factors that influence behavior on any given day to ever

³⁸ Falk, J. & Dierking, L. (1992). *The Museum Experience*. Washington, DC: Whalesback Books. .

³⁹ Falk J. & Dierking, L. (2013) *The Museum Experience Revisited*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

understand this idea completely. Falk and Dierking do argue, one thing that does influence visitor's likelihood to read text, is where in the gallery the text is located. Guests are likely to read more labels in the first 20-30 minutes of their visit. This is particularly interesting given that the two exhibits I will be studying for this research are at the very end of the galleries at the GWBPL.

The body of museum studies literature also includes a variety of educational theories and learning styles. All museums are not created equal; some museums feature little to no interpretation, while others feature only hands-on interactives and no collections. This variety in museum style influences the learning approaches applied in a museum. In his book, *Learning in the Museum*, George E. Hein shares a model of educational theories (Figure 2.3). This model shows the educational theory that develops when theories of knowledge and learning intersect. The educational theories that Hein discusses are: didactic/expository, discovery, stimulus-response, and constructivism.⁴¹

Didactic is the approach most similar to traditional classroom learning, where a student listens to an expert or teacher and absorbs information. This learning approach was found most frequently in initial museum educational practice, especially in art museums. Discovery learning is when knowledge exists outside the learner, but they come to reach that knowledge through their own thought and activity. This model is popular in science and technology museums, where visitors are introduced to scientific theories or concepts through interactive experiences. Stimulus response and constructivist approaches allow visitors to personally construct knowledge, either through incremental or active learning. Stimulus response is often found in schools, an example of this model is tests, where

⁴¹ Hein, George E. (2009) *Learning in the Museum*, Routledge, London.

students are encouraged to memorize information. Hein describes constructivism as having an appeal to museums because “it matches the informal, voluntary nature of most learning associated with museums.”⁴² In this framework, visitors create their own understanding or knowledge through active participation.

All of these avenues of education allow for some type of learning in the museum, though some more than others depending on the content, facilitation level, and level of interactivity in the gallery.

This body of museum literature influences the way I study the galleries at the GWBPL. All exhibit design components, interpretive text, and educational models combine to create a visitor experience that has been intentionally designed. While this is the case for the design and creation of all other museums, we should not forget about the development team responsible for these libraries. If teams close to the president are working to use facilitation to increase appreciation for the president,⁴³ their use of design and interpretation must be strategic.

⁴² G.E. Hein, “Museum Education,” in S. MacDonald, editor, *A Companion to Museum Studies*, Oxford: Blackwell, Publishing, 2006. Chapter 20

⁴³ Ham, Sam H. (2013) *Interpretation: Making a Difference on Purpose*. Golden: Fulcrum Publishing.

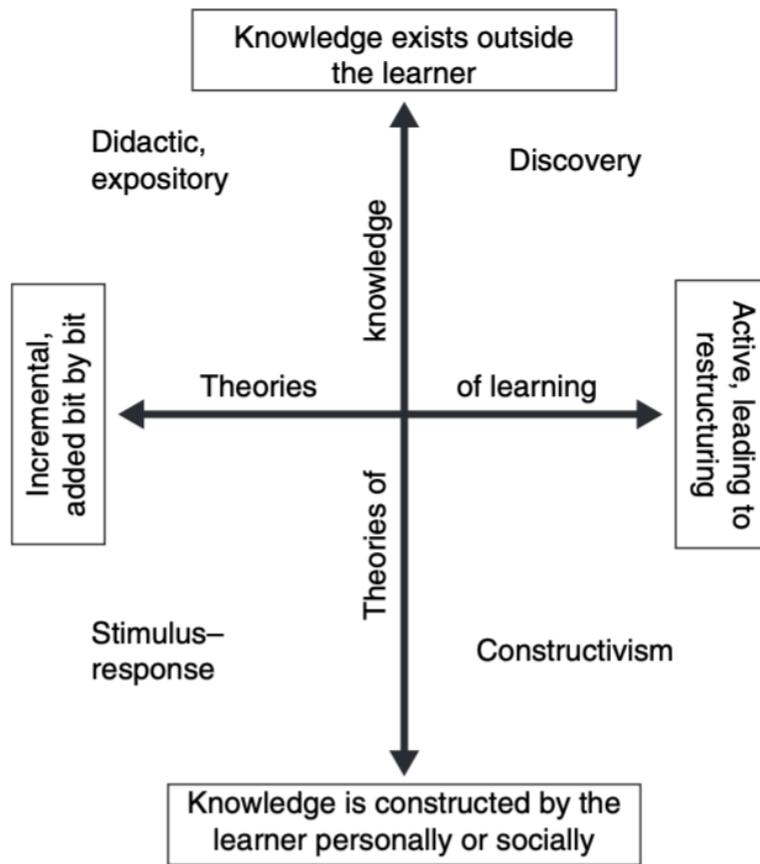


Figure 2.3 George E. Heins Model of Educational Theories, from Learning in the Museum

Public Approval

The final field of research that influences this study is the field of public approval. Public approval is a rating given to the president by the American people that represents their confidence in the president's ability. Gallup's Presidential Approval Center describes these ratings as, "a simple, yet powerful, measure of the public's view of the U.S. president's job performance at a particular point in time."⁴⁴ This research uses approval rating numbers from Gallup; therefore, it is necessary to understand how Gallup collects this data and how it is interpreted.

Gallup has collected and reported presidential job approval since 1928.⁴⁵ From 1938-2008, Gallup reported data based on "discrete, multiday surveys" and in 2009, they began using daily samplings and interviews to report three-day averages. During President Bush's time in office the polls were conducted via landline telephone.⁴⁶

A 2017 Gallup article discussed how former Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama have experienced a rise in popularity since leaving office.⁴⁷ Gallup reports that Bush's approval rose from 34% in January of 2009 to 59% in June of 2017. This approval is also rising in all major demographic groups, male and female voters, white and non-white, and all age ranges. The increase in approval from Republican voters

⁴⁴ Gallup, Inc. (n.d.). Presidential Job Approval Center. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/interactives/185273/presidential-job-approval-center.aspx>.

⁴⁵ Gallup, Inc. (n.d.), An Overview of Gallup's Presidential Approval Ratings. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/245606/update-gallup-presidential-approval-ratings.aspx>.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Gallup, Inc. (2017). George W. Bush and Barack Obama Both Popular in Retirement. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/212633/george-bush-barack-obama-popular-retirement.aspx>.

is marginal, the main source of gradual recovery comes from Democrats and Independents.⁴⁸

Gallup offers no explanation for this change in attitude toward the former president, but other reports speculate that this trend is due to Bush's behavior since leaving office.⁴⁹ In an article for the Washington Post, professor and author of *BUSH*, a biography of the former president, Jean Smith writes that Bush's transition from Chief Executive to private citizen is what we should expect from our presidents. He quietly left office, has not engaged in the political conversation, and has taken up activism in the private sector, specifically working with the AIDS crisis in Africa.⁵⁰ These qualities and behaviors since leaving Washington in 2009 have made Bush a man who Smith describes, "deserves our continuing respect."⁵¹

Bush was in the public eye more in 2018 when his father, another former president, George H. W. Bush died. Other than this, he has continued to remain quiet on political issues, especially in a time where the political climate is hard to navigate. The former president has written two books, a memoir and a book about his father. Bush's memoir *Decision Points* casts an interesting light on the Decision Points Theater at the GWBPL. In the introductory chapter of his book, Bush writes, "The passage of time

⁴⁸ Gallup, Inc. (2017). George W. Bush and Barack Obama Both Popular in Retirement. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/212633/george-bush-barack-obama-popular-retirement.aspx>.

⁴⁹ Smith, Jean. (2016) "George W. Bush was not a good president. As a former president, he's been exemplary." WashingtonPost.com.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

allows passions to cool, results to clarify, and scholars to compare different approaches.”⁵² This statement and goal for his autobiography is interesting, as he explains in his memoir that he will go on to discuss difficult decisions he made in his presidency, what led to these decisions, and his reflection now.

Conclusion

These bodies of literature can help us to understand presidential libraries and their unique position in society. Like most museums, presidential libraries are interdisciplinary institutions, interpreting politics, American history, and culture. Unlike most museums, their structure and development are influenced by a private political institution that is responsible for interpretation, exhibit design, and educational theories that influence the visitor experience and tell a story about the former president. Museum theories often exist in institutions that serve to educate without a political motivation or influence. Considering this, how are these theories used in an organization that could benefit politically by creating a certain visitor experience? How does the interpretation at the GWBPL compare to the interpretation in the media of the former president and the public approval ratings at the time? These are questions that will be addressed in the methodology and data chapters to follow.

⁵² Bush, George W. *Decision Points*. New York: Broadway Paperbacks, 2010.

CHAPTER THREE

Procedure

As the most recent presidential library and museum, the George W. Bush Presidential Library in Dallas, Texas opened in 2013 on the campus of Southern Methodist University. It is operated by the George W. Bush Presidential Library and the National Archives Record Administration. The Bush Library is the thirteenth presidential library administered by NARA and follows precedents set by previous libraries, holding partnerships with a number of private organizations like Southern Methodist University, the George W. Bush Foundation, and the George Bush Institute.

As discussed in chapter two, there is existing literature that studies trends in presidential library exhibitions and favorability or bias toward former presidents. Hufbauer promotes the claim that, because the creation of these libraries is intimately intertwined with the presidents themselves, they use their libraries for personal commemoration.¹ This trend in self-commemoration has been studied broadly by a number of political scientists and public historians; since the George W. Bush Library is fairly new, it has not yet been studied in much detail. I was also interested in looking at this self-commemoration and potential bias through a more objective, data-driven approach. In order to do this, I had to determine how to analyze the museum's interpretation. When I was pursuing my bachelor's degree in Political Science, I was

¹ Hufbauer, B. (2006). Spotlights and Shadows: Presidents and Their Administrations in Presidential Museum Exhibits. *The Public Historian*, 28(3), 117-132.

interested in approval ratings and public opinions of presidents. This interest in public approval is something I often thought about while visiting presidential libraries. Once I learned more about the development of these institutions, I set out to determine whether or not this leads to bias exhibits through interpretation.

Selection of Site

When I first began to formulate my research question², I knew it was necessary to visit presidential libraries to look at the exhibits firsthand. I was geographically well situated. Waco has three presidential libraries within driving distance, Lyndon B. Johnson in Austin, Texas, George H. W. Bush in College Station, Texas, and George W. Bush in Dallas, Texas.

The first library I visited was the George H. W. Bush presidential library in College Station, Texas. I studied Bush's Gallup approval ratings beforehand, wanting to see how particularly low periods of public approval are interpreted in the gallery. When I arrived and made my way through the museum, I was surprised to see that most of the coverage of H. W. Bush's presidency stops after the Gulf War Gallery. The 41st President's approval dropped dramatically toward the end of his term.³ The former president had above average approval for his first three years in office, but in 1992, he began to sink in approval due to economic concerns and rising unemployment.⁴ This

² My research question is again, how primary source media coverage of these two events during George W. Bush's presidency compares with the interpretation of the same events at the GWBPL.

³ Gallup, Inc. (n.d.) George H. W. Bush Retrospective. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/gallup/234971/george-bush-retrospective.aspx>.

⁴ Ibid.

economic downturn took George H. W. Bush from being an above average president to having one of the lowest approval scores ever recorded by Gallup.⁵ This low approval marked the end of Bush's term in office, as he was defeated in the 1992 election by Bill Clinton.

At the George H. W. Bush Library in College Station Texas, visitors are taken chronologically through his life, starting with his childhood, time in the U.S. Navy during World War II, his term in Congress, work as the Ambassador to the United Nations and in the CIA, service as the Vice President to Ronald Reagan, through the election of 1988, and then extensively through his time in office (Figure 3.1). The Crisis Management gallery toward the end of the museum takes visitors through an interactive situation room experience, the Gulf War, and Eco-Terrorism.

These exhibits take visitors through high points of public approval, but once Bush Sr.'s approval started to dip, coverage in the exhibits is nonexistent. This makes the library an interesting example of presidential libraries as sites of self-commemoration, but the lack of coverage of times of low approval does not lend itself to the data driven study of interpretation I was beginning to formulate.

⁵ Gallup, Inc. (n.d.) George H. W. Bush Retrospective. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/gallup/234971/george-bush-retrospective.aspx>.

In September of 2019 I visited the George W. Bush Presidential Library in Dallas, Texas. I had been to this library before as a visitor, but this time I visited with my research question in mind. My advisor, Dr. Kim McCray and I drove to Dallas to visit the museum and meet with two staff members of the library. I was determined to visit this presidential museum with the same approach I had at the H. W. Bush Library. I was aware of Bush's approval ratings; I was seeking out interpretation of events that correlated to low public approval. On this visit I noticed many of the events tied to low public approval were interpreted in the gallery, both in traditional exhibits as well as interactive components.

I was, however, surprised to find how limited some of these exhibits actually are. The size of these exhibits was discouraging, due to their centrality to my study, but I think it is an interesting choice of interpretation in and of itself. Despite their lack of expansiveness, the exhibits contain examples of interpretive exhibit panels that will be useful for understanding how the library is interpreting events to the visitors. I was pleased with this discovery and decided to move forward with a case study analysis of interpretation in exhibits at the GWBPL. I was still attempting to answer my question, whether or not the development of the library created exhibits which were overtly positive about the former president.

Selection of Events

To answer my question, I had to decide which events to focus on at the GWBPL. In order to control for the rally affect that many presidents experience, after a crisis like 9/11, I chose two crises toward the end of Bush's second term, that appeared to be

isolated events with a clear cause: Hurricane Katrina and the financial crisis.⁶ Both events were discussed widely, affected many Americans personally, and happened during the lowest period of public approval for the president.

While all political events affect the lives of Americans in one way or another, I believe Hurricane Katrina and the financial crisis are two events that visitors may be most likely to relate to. Visitors may have been personally affected by the financial crisis or known someone affected by the hurricane. Ham's TORE approach recommends that for interpretation to be successful it must have a theme, it must be organized, it must be relevant to the audience, and it must be enjoyable.⁷ Information that is relevant to visitors will be easier and more successfully interpreted. Hurricane Katrina and the financial crisis are two events that are most relevant to the average adult visitor.

These events are also correlated to low points of public approval in Bush's presidency. The first interpreted date of the Hurricane Katrina in the library is September 2, 2005. Gallup's public opinion data from September 8-11th, puts Bush at an approval of 46%.⁸ At the end of the interpretive dates from Hurricane Katrina, October 30th, 2008 President Bush has an approval rating of 31%. Despite having approval ratings in the 60's, 70's, and even 80's in earlier years of his presidency, Bush's approval numbers do not rise above 46% in the interpreted period. During the financial crisis, Bush experienced even lower public approval numbers. On the first interpreted date in the

⁶ Miroff, Bruce. *The Presidential Spectacle*, 2003

⁷ Ham, Sam H. *Interpretation: Making a Difference on Purpose*. Golden: Fulcrum Publishing, 2013.

⁸ Gallup, Inc. (n.d.). Presidential Approval Ratings -- George W. Bush. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/116500/presidential-approval-ratings-george-bush.aspx>.

gallery, March 16, 2008, President Bush has an approval rating of 32% and only 28% when the coverage ends.⁹

Site Observation and Interpretive Data Gathering

During my original research visit to the GWBPL a docent stopped to talk to me. The docent, in his navy blazer, crisp white button down, khaki pants, and American flag pin, informed me that the exhibits are not ordered chronologically, instead they are organized by the core values that guided the 43rd President's two terms. Tall text panels introduce visitors to the value of each section. Some of these values include: Defending Freedom, Defending the Homeland, Acting with Compassion, and Crisis Management.¹⁰ The museum experience begins with information of Bush's early life, growing up in Midland, Texas, his life as the son of a U.S. President, marriage to his wife Laura - who is also featured heavily throughout museum - his term as the Governor of Texas, and then transitions into his race for the presidency. Other galleries include information about the No Child Left Behind act, extensive emotional galleries about the tragedies of 9/11, a full-size replica of the Oval Office and more (Figure 3.2).

Toward the end of the galleries, visitors come across the Bush Library's interactive theater the Decision Points Theater (DPT). Similar models of interaction exist at other presidential libraries, like the George H. W. Bush library in College Station and the aforementioned Roosevelt Library. These types of interactive exhibits give visitors the opportunity to make decisions and "be" the president. Everything about the exhibition

⁹ Gallup, Inc. (n.d.). Presidential Approval Ratings -- George W. Bush. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/116500/presidential-approval-ratings-george-bush.aspx>.

¹⁰ A full list of the twelve core values along with their corresponding interpretive text can be found in the appendix

design of the decision points theater is sleek and modern and is an example of McKenna-Cress's Immersive Theatrical Environment.¹¹ The DPT is open to the rest of the gallery (Figure 3.3), allowing other visitors observe and for participants to feel the freedom to leave at any time. The theater has dramatic blue lighting, large touch screen monitors, and a patriotic musical score. You are invited to sit down in pairs at one of the stations and wait for the experience to begin.

Once the show starts, the lights dim and Josh Bolten and Andy Card, two of President Bush's Chiefs of Staff appear on screen to welcome visitors and explain the experience.¹² Guests vote from a selection of four events that President Bush mitigated during his presidency: The surge, the capture of Saddam Hussein, Hurricane Katrina, and the financial crisis. Once all players in the theater have voted, the scenario with the highest number of votes begins. As the advisors explain the event, the room remains dark and dramatic. Video cuts to a montage of news reports, setting the scene of the event. The chief of staff narrator returns to tell you what happens next. You now have the opportunity to emulate the president: "You are about to select expert advice from a variety of people. Just as President Bush, did you will have to weigh conflicting points of view...Work fast, the clock is ticking."¹³ You are made to feel as though you are the president, you are having an experience, much like President Bush did.

¹¹ McKenna-Cress, P. & Kamien J. (2013) *Creating Exhibitions: Collaborating in the Planning, Development, and Design of Innovative Experiences*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

¹² Full Transcript of the Decision Points Theater experience for Hurricane Katrina and the Financial Crisis are in the Appendix.

¹³ DPT Transcript

Visitors then select their advisors, options include policy makers, citizens, law enforcement officials, and business experts. These experts are of course, not experts, but rather actors, hired by the exhibition team to read from a script. Each monologue represents conflicting viewpoints. As visitors listen to the experts, a slider bar appears on screen for visitors to record their feelings. Staff at the GWBPL reported that there was no information available regarding the development of the exhibit, potentially due to the fact that it was designed by a third-party firm.¹⁴ It would be interesting to study these expert videos more in depth and analyze what nonverbal communicators are used to persuade visitors to favor one of the options. If you were not familiar with Bush's decisions while in office, it is not immediately clear from the expert monologues. But, in his review of the library, Bruce Levy writes:

The problem here is typical of the problems throughout the museum – the whole thing seems rigged, under the heading 'Iraqi Academics,' for example, two figures *playing* Iraqi academics appear on the screen, one for, the other against, invasion. The first is a well-dressed, clear-eyed gentleman speaking calmly about the support the invasion will garner among the Iraqi people and how the invasion will create freedom, opportunity, and hope throughout the region. The academic opposed to invasion, on the other hand, is a bit unkempt, more thickly accented than his more temperate colleague, wide-eyed, and ever-so-slightly hysterical.¹⁵

Visitors continue to hear from experts and use the slider bar on their screen to rate their reactions to each experts' points. During the experience, news breaks on screen at the front of the theater, interrupting the expert's monologues. These announcements include dramatic audio sensory triggers that change the environment of the room. As the experience concludes, a timer begins to beep, alerting participants that their time is

¹⁴ Christina Oliver, Kelly Seufert, Interview by author, Dallas, TX, September 20, 2019

¹⁵ Levy, Bruce. *The George W. Bush Presidential Center, Dallas, Texas*, 202.

ending. Guests must then vote, and once everyone in the theater has voted, President Bush appears on screen to explain the decision he made, and why.

Overall, this interactive exhibit creates a gestalt experience that McKenna-Cress and Kamien describe. The DPT is experienced as the sum of its parts, all sensory factors are there intentionally to create a feeling of drama and stress in the participant.¹⁶ If this experience is attempting to convey to visitors just how stressful it is to make one of these decisions in office, it does a good job. The combination of sensory factors throughout the experience make it overwhelming. There are distractions, constant breaking news updates, and many intelligent people who disagree on what is best. By allowing the visitor step into the president shoes, even if just for ten minutes, guests may begin to understand the complexities of the Presidency.

All of the events interpreted in the DPT correspond with low points of public approval for former President Bush.¹⁷ This exhibit was a part of the initial development of the museum, meaning it was developed and designed by the team assembled by former President Bush. Knowing the background of the development of this exhibit as well as hearing from the president in his memoir, aptly titled *Decision Points*, one wonders what the goal of this exhibition is. What message does this experience attempt to send to visitors, if any? Is there any way that this experience and explanation from the president himself, behind a particular decision, could change or influence the way participants view

¹⁶ McKenna-Cress, P. & Kamien J. (2013) *Creating Exhibitions: Collaborating in the Planning, Development, and Design of Innovative Experiences*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

¹⁷ Gallup, Inc. (n.d.). Presidential Approval Ratings -- George W. Bush. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/116500/presidential-approval-ratings-george-bush.aspx>.

the president? In addition to humanizing the president, could an exhibit like this change attitudes toward a president?

As you exit the DPT, there are a few more exhibits to explore before the gallery ends. Directly to the left of the theater is an orientation panel, this one for ‘Crisis Management’. This exhibit contains information on the issues that are the focus of this study, Hurricane Katrina and the financial crisis. As I mentioned earlier, these exhibits are very small in scale, compared to the rest of the museum. When discussing this area of the museum with staff from the library, I learned this area of the museum was hit hardest by budget and resource cuts as the museum neared the end of its development.¹⁸ The need for budget cuts toward the end of development is something that many museums may struggle with, but it is interesting to wonder why these areas were the ones that were hit the hardest.

I took photographs of all of the text panels, books, and audio recordings of the DPT in order to create transcripts that would inform my research. Once I gathered all necessary information from the museum, it was time to find media sources.

¹⁸ Christina Oliver, Kelly Seufert, Interview by author, Dallas, TX, September 20, 2019.

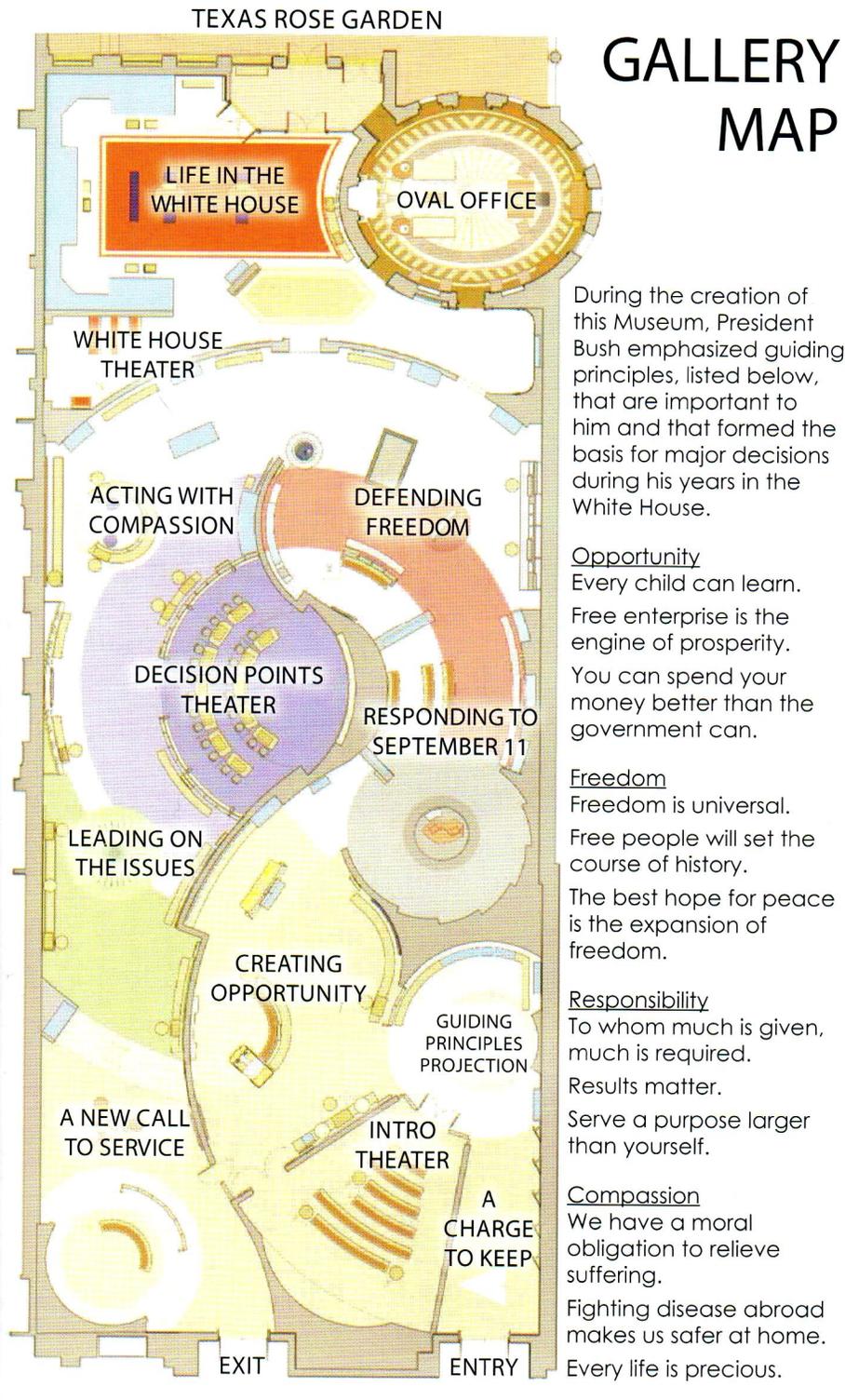


Figure 3.2 Gallery map of the GWBPL, courtesy of museum staff



Figure 3.3 The Decision Points Theater at the GWBPL, courtesy of museum staff



Figure 3.4 Hurricane Katrina & Financial Crisis Exhibits at the GWBPL

Selection of Articles

In order to understand the level of balance in the interpretation at the GWBPL, I compared exhibit text to primary source articles covering the same events. It is important to keep in mind that these interpreted events correspond to particularly low points of public approval. Selection of the primary sources was important in creating a balanced data set. In order to account for political bias in the media, I chose two newspapers based in the same city, Washington D.C., a liberal leaning publication, the *Washington Post*, and a conservative publication, the *Washington Times*. Once I solidified the sources, the next step was to develop a model for collecting information from both media sources as well as exhibit text.

In the exhibits at the Bush library, Hurricane Katrina and the financial crisis are interpreted within the context of a timeline. These timelines give the events a clear beginning and end date, though really these events continue to impact the lives of Americans to this day. The dates interpreted in the exhibit are the dates I used to pull articles from the *Washington Post* and the *Washington Times*.

Using two different online databases for the two different publications, I used the dates from the Hurricane Katrina timeline book and the financial crisis panels as well as the following dates, in order to allow time for the news cycle to pick up a story. Once I narrowed down the publication to articles from those days, I used the following search terms: President Bush, Hurricane Katrina, economy, & financial crisis, to find articles that met my criteria.

Criteria for Analysis

Once I isolated all articles from the interpreted dates that included the key words, I began to collect data. I collected data by reading all of the primary source articles, exhibit text, and DPT transcripts. While reading, I searched for descriptive words, describing either the event or the president himself. This process proved to be difficult, as the number of articles that met this criterion were vast. Something that made it hard to pull single descriptive words was journalist's tendency to use satirical or facetious tones that often changed the meaning of the words. To account for this, only words used in context of original meaning were analyzed. I applied this same criterion to the exhibit text panels and the scripts from the Decision Points Theater.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data and Analysis

The following data was collected through the procedure outlined in Chapter Three. Each table reflects a different set of data from an area of the museum galleries, or from the primary source media text used as a source of comparison.

After all relevant words were pulled from the articles, I entered them into a spreadsheet to record the data and determine frequency of relevant words. I was able to sort this list alphabetically as well as by frequency. This was useful in beginning to analyze and interpret my data to find trends. A full list of the raw data can be found in the Appendix, which begins on page 58.

Analysis

Through a comparison of the data, I determined that the language used to describe President Bush in the media was slightly different than the language used at the GWBPL, but not much. There are a few differences in the language used and how that language paints an image of the former president. Before analyzing the data, it is important to recognize the differences in the text. The text at the Bush Library that relates to these events is limited to one to two text panels and the verbal language of the Decision Points Theater. The primary source media on the other hand is much more expansive. There was a total of eighty-three articles that fit the Hurricane Katrina criteria and forty-three for the financial crisis. This quantity of articles meant that there was simply more interpretive

language used to describe the president. Despite the large body of sources, I was able to interpret the data in order to identify trends and themes.

My hypothesis was that the interpretive text at the GWBPL would be more favorable toward the former president than the interpretive text from the primary source articles. In order to determine whether or not this can be seen from the data, I sorted the data by the number of appearances. This allowed me to see what sources spent most time talking about, and in what way. I sorted through the data from all sources to code for how many overall descriptive words were positive, how many were negative, and how many were neutral. After analyzing the data numerically, I noticed a trend in the data in the subjects of the descriptive words.

Numerology

In order to better deal with the extensive data sets from the primary source media, I sorted the descriptive words by order of appearances and created a subset of data of words that only appear three or more times. In the case of the exhibit text panels from the library, the small quantity of exhibit text meant no words met this criterion. Since the exhibit text is a crucial part of the comparison, words that appear two or more times have been isolated in the tables below. Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 outline the frequently appearing words from primary source media, the DPT experience, and exhibit text panels for Hurricane Katrina. Tables 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 outline the same data for the event of the financial crisis.

Table 4.1 Hurricane Katrina primary source media, overview.

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Slow (er, ly)	15
Devastat (ed, ing, ion)	13
Disaster	5
Incompeten (t, ence)	5
Natural disaster (s)	5
Better	4
Botched	4
Catastroph (e, ic)	4
Faster	4
Oblivious	4
Calamity	3
Embarrass (ment)	3
Flawed	3
Inadequate	3
Rare	3
Ravaged	3
Right	3
Serious (ly)	3
Sluggish	3
Worst	3

Table 4.2 Hurricane Katrina decision points theater, overview.

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Chao (s, tic)	4
Crisis	4
Overwhelmed	4
Lawlessness	3

Table 4.3 Hurricane Katrina exhibit text panels, overview.

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Damaged	2
Devastat (ed, ing, ion)	2
Ravaged	2

Table 4.4 Financial crisis: primary source media, overview.

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Fail (ed, ure, ures)	15
Crisis	12
Troubled	11
Low (er, est)	7
Skeptic (al, ism)	6
Dramatic (ally)	5
Massive	5
Urg (ency, ent, ing)	5
Wors (e, t)	5
Biggest	4
Confidence	4
Lame duck	4
Large (st, r)	4
Quick (ly)	4
Slow	4
Terrible	4
Unprecedented	4
Bad (ly)	3
Broad	3
Catastroph (e, ic, ically)	3
Crucial	3
Defeat	3
Fear	3
High (est)	3
Immediate (ly)	3
Plung (ed, ing)	3
Risk (ier)	3
Sharp (ly)	3
Starkest	3
Sweeping	3
Tough (er)	3
Vast	3
Weak (ened)	3
Wipe (d) out	3

Table 4.5 Financial crisis decision points theater, overview.

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Crisis	15
Panic	6
Collapse (d)	5
Fail (ed)	3
Great Depression	3
Large (st)	3
Mistake (s)	3

Table 4.6 Financial crisis exhibit text, overview.

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Fail (ed, ing, ure)	5
Free	3
Crisis	2
Panic	2

The first analysis I did of my data determined the favorability. I coded the full set of condensed data from the DPT, exhibit text, and primary source media, for positive, negative, and neutral language. As you can see in Tables 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, and 4.6, all of the interpretive language used by the GWBPL to interpret the situation are negative. The data in table 4.1 demonstrates that, of the language used in the media to describe Hurricane Katrina, seventeen words were negative, two were positive, and only one was neutral. For the financial crisis, the distribution was less. Thirty-three of the words in the data set were used with a negative connotation while only one was positive.

It was surprising to find that all interpretive language used in the museum to describe the situation was negative. All of the data in these sets is interpretive, the text I used is as Beverly Serrell described, they “tell stories; they are narratives, not lists of

facts.”¹ There are other text panels in the galleries that list only facts, but those were not included for this comparison of interpretation. If the phrasing in the library is no different tone wise, why is the feeling you get in the Hurricane Katrina DPT different than when you read articles from the media. I believe there are two differences that set these mediums apart and tell a different story about the former president: the content described in the exhibits, and the intentional exhibit design.

Content

Once I realized that the difference in the exhibitions was not an overt favorability or positive connotation, I was interested to see if the library was still telling a story that created positive feelings toward the president. One of the most interesting discoveries I came across in my analysis was that the subjects interpreted at the GWBPL are different than those in the media.

Of the words that fit the Hurricane Katrina criteria in the primary source media (Table 4.1), twelve of the words describe President Bush and his response to the crisis, while eight describe the hurricane. In the DPT (Table 4.2) and exhibit text (Table 4.3), all eight words that meet the criteria describe the hurricane rather than the president himself.

The same cannot be said for the financial crisis. The media from the financial crisis (Table 4.4), uses only six words to describe President Bush, and twenty-nine describe the crisis. As I read the media sources, I noticed much of the conversation around response to the crisis was focused on the candidates who were running for office in the 2008 presidential election: Barack Obama and John McCain. This crisis occurred

¹ Serrell, Beverly. (2015) *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach*. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield.

near the end of George W. Bush's term in office. This appears to have influenced the media coverage of his response to the event. One descriptive phrase is telling of how the media viewed the former president at this time "Lame duck" (Table 4.4). Despite this inconsistency with the primary source data, the DPT and exhibit text from the financial crisis has a similar outcome as Hurricane Katrina. All 11 words describe the crisis.

In both Hurricane Katrina and the financial crisis, the language in the library is used entirely to describe the events. Words like "crisis" come up in multiple areas of the gallery (Tables 4.2, 4.5, and 4.6). This use of language like "Panic" (Tables 4.5, 4.6) or "Devastated" (Table 4.3), may invoke emotion surrounding the event, which may take away attention from the president's response. Even the theme of Bush's leading value for this section of the gallery is titled, "Crisis Management" (Figure 4.1). This panel orienting the visitor to the "crisis" area of the museum sparks the question of what conscious exhibit design choices are being made in the DPT and gallery to tell a story about the former president.

Exhibit Design

As discussed in the literature review, Polly McKenna-Cress describes exhibits as areas that are experienced as the sum of their parts.² While I believe it is inconclusive from the data whether the text in the gallery presents a more favorable view of the president, exhibit text is only one component of the visitor experience. At this point, toward the end of the gallery, visitors may or may not be reading all of the labels.³ I

² McKenna-Cress, P. & Kamien J. (2013) *Creating Exhibitions: Collaborating in the Planning, Development, and Design of Innovative Experiences*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

³ Serrell, Beverly. (2015) *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach*. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield.

believe the development team at the GWBPL may be trying to paint a picture of President Bush through a different means of intentional exhibit design.

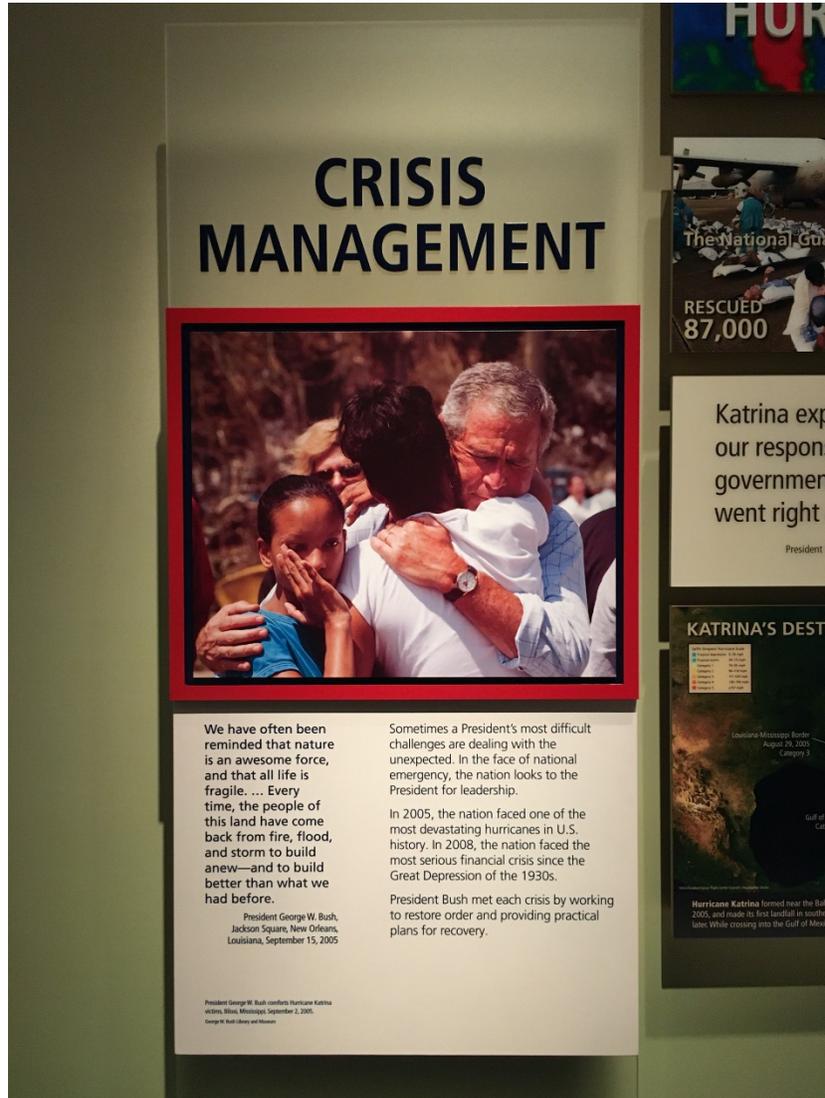


Figure 4.1 Crisis management panel at the GWBPL

The image chosen to accompany the leading value of this area (Figure 4.1) shows the former president embracing two women of color. The caption on this photo reads,

“President George W. Bush comforts Hurricane Katrina victims, Biloxi, Mississippi, September 2, 2005.” I believe the choice for this photo and the caption are an example of intentional exhibit design. In his 2010 autobiography, President Bush discusses the accusations that his delayed response providing aid and assistance for those affected by the hurricane had to do with race. He states, “the allegation that racism played a role in the government’s response was one of the worst moments of my presidency.”⁴

This regret may have influenced the interpretation of the hurricane. The interpretation did not happen through language, but rather through images and strategic coverage, the museum paints the president in the light of a crisis manager, who comforts those in need.

Analysis Conclusion

The evidence is inconclusive. Because of the discrepancy in the data between Hurricane Katrina and the financial crisis, I don’t believe it is possible to say for sure one way or the other if the media interprets a harsher image of the president. It is clear, though, from the data that the library spends more time describing the crisis rather than describing the president’s response.

Much of the Hurricane Katrina text in the data set comes from a book that visitors can sit and flip through. This book takes visitors through Bush’s response to the crisis with pages full of narratives about the president visiting Mississippi and Louisiana, and photographs of the former president with his shirt sleeves rolled up, hugging families or helping out at a food bank. From the pages of this book, it is clear the library is focused on painting the former president in a light of compassion and assistance for those in need.

⁴ Bush, George W. *Decision Points*. New York: Broadway Paperbacks, 2010.

I am surprised the data does not reflect an attempt on behalf of the GWBPL to create a narrative of compassion. This attempt at creating a narrative of compassion is seen instead through image choice and portraying to visitors an intensity of the crises the president mitigated.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

The interpretative text at the GWBPL was unexpected. I had hypothesized that an overt bias would be clear through an analysis and comparison of exhibit text and primary source media. This hypothesis was founded on the museum studies, presidential libraries and public approval literature I gathered. Knowing what I did about the use interpretation in museums to lead to appreciative attitudes,¹ and how governance in presidential libraries often leads to commemoration,² I assumed that interpretation in the exhibit text at the GWBPL would be the way developers attempted to change attitudes of the president.

Through the data, one can see that there is no conclusive evidence as to how the data in the Library and the media are different. Media coverage of Hurricane Katrina and the financial crisis are also very different, making it difficult to understand. There is almost no media attention paid to President Bush in the midst of the financial crisis. Both the media and the text at the library use negative words to describe the situation, which contradicted my original hypothesis that the museum would take on a positive interpretation. The difference between the two data sets became clear when I looked at the subjects of the text.

¹ Ham, Sam H. (2013) *Interpretation: Making a Difference on Purpose*. Golden: Fulcrum Publishing.

² Hufbauer, B. (2006). *Presidential temples: How memorials and libraries shape public memory*. Lawrence, Kan.: Univ. Press of Kansas.

Exhibit text and DPT audio focuses attention describing the tragedy of the events, rather than describing President Bush's response to the situation. The media however uses negative language to describe both the event as well as the president's behavior. In addition to using descriptive text at the library to paint a picture of the president, other avenues play a role in the interpretation of the president. Interactive museum experiences, exhibit design decisions like photographs, and even the structure and size of exhibits are all intentional ways the developers crafted a story of President Bush.

Committees appointed to develop presidential libraries are an interesting part of this research. Learning about the structure and governance of these institutions through the body of research discussed in Chapter Two, it is no wonder presidential libraries are often scrutinized as being centers of commemoration. In order for these "complex gemstones,"³ better known as presidential libraries to live up to the standard of reliability that visitors come to expect from history museums,⁴ development must be balanced.

Eventually, perhaps, as with the Truman Library, time will allow for balanced redevelopment of museum galleries in all presidential libraries. In the meantime, though, before living memory dissipates and balanced conversation takes over, we must be aware of the bias in these institutions. Despite the inconclusive evidence for bias in the interpretive text at the George W. Bush Presidential Library, I believe there are signs of bias in other areas. Bias may manifest in other areas in the gallery as well as in public

³ Fawcett, Sharon K. "Presidential Libraries: A View from the Center." *The Public Historian* 28, no. 3 (2006)

⁴ American Alliance of Museums. "Museums: Did You Know?" <https://www.michiganmuseums.org/resources/Documents/Infographic%20AAM.pdf>

programming and events. This should be studied further, not just at the George W. Bush library in Dallas, but in all presidential libraries.

As these institutions continue to develop it is important to recognize the implicit bias they will have. The authors and researchers I included will also have implicit biases that influences the way they conduct their research. I also have an implicit bias that has influenced this body of work as well. My educational background in political science, personal political beliefs, and personal life experience are unique. Additionally, I am privileged to have not been personally affected by either of the events discussed in this thesis. All of these factors create in me an implicit bias that influences the way I have processed my data.

As long as presidential libraries remain in their current structure, political motivations will influence the way exhibit are developed and potentially interpreted by guests. The Barak Obama Presidential Center, which has yet to open, is beginning to break the mold of the sites that have preceded it. The center, which will include a museum, “won’t actually be a presidential library.”⁵ Instead of having a research site on the property, often where scholars go to learn more about our former presidents, all archives will be digitized and made available online. This decision means that there will be no partnership with NARA. The center will be administered solely by the Obama Foundation.

Scholars are divided on whether or not this is a step in the right direction for presidential libraries. Some argue that this is an “unambiguous good for the taxpayer.”

⁵ Schuessler, Jennifer. “The Obama Presidential Library That Isn’t.” The New York Times, February 20, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/20/arts/obama-presidential-center-library-national-archives-and-records-administration.html>.

Others call it an “institutional bait and switch.”⁶ This decision was influenced by the types of presidential materials produced by the Obama administration. In addition to traditional paper materials, Obama’s records include over 300 million emails and other digital records. These records lend themselves to digital preservation. As we develop further technologically, presidents will produce collections that will require digitization. It is unclear whether or not this separation from NARA at the Obama Presidential Center will lead to more biased exhibitions, but it will be interesting to study further when the center opens.

Our society has an inherent trust in museums as centers for information.⁷ 98% of Americans believe that museums are educational.⁸ Institutions should be aware of this perceived trust and conscious of protecting that relationship. Presidential libraries, sites that contain museum galleries, should not be exempt from this trustworthiness. Library resources, such as political status and connections with NARA, should be used intentionally to create educational experiences for visitors that are transformative and lead to a more accurate view of the presidency. These centers have the opportunity to use their voices and exhibits for good. They could give visitors ownership of our country’s history, leading to more civic engagement and political action. But these opportunities

⁶ Schuessler, Jennifer. “The Obama Presidential Library That Isn’t.” *The New York Times*, February 20, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/20/arts/obama-presidential-center-library-national-archives-and-records-administration.html>.

⁷ “Museum Facts & Data.” American Alliance of Museums, December 11, 2018. https://www.aam-us.org/programs/about-museums/museum-facts-data/#_edn25.

⁸ *Ibid.*

can only happen if libraries make a conscious effort to remain fair and balanced in their exhibitions. Visitors should not have to wait for a second wave of exhibitions, after the president and close family and friends have died, and a generation has passed to get balanced interpretation of our leaders. At the George W. Bush library, it is unclear from this data, the level of balance in exhibitions. The text does not suggest overt bias to the reader, but perhaps more subvert methods of interpretation are being used to lead to a more appreciative view of our 43rd President.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Raw Data

Table A.1 Decision points theater at the GWBPL, Hurricane Katrina.

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Better	1
Big	1
Bolster	1
Chao (s, tic)	4
Crisis	4
Danger	1
Diminished	1
Emergency	1
Fast	1
Federalize	1
Lawlessness	3
Mistake	1
Order	2
Overwhelmed	4
Powerful	1
Rampant	1
Supporting	1
Tough	1
Unsafe	1
Panic	6
Private	1

Table A.2 Decision points theater at GWBPL, financial crisis.

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Angry	1
Biggest	1
Collapse (d)	5
Confidence	1
Conflicting	1
Consequences	1
Crisis	15
Dramatic	1
Expert	1
Fail (ed)	3
Great Depression	3
Healthy	1
Historic	1
Huge	1
Incentive	1
Irresponsibly	1
Large (st)	3
Mistake (s)	3
Nervous	1
Normal	1
Order	1
Overpriced	1
Panic	6
Private	1
Quickly	1
Recession	1
Recover	1
Responsibly	1
Restrictions	1
Risk	1
Seized	1
Severe	1
Shield	1
Slowing	1
Stabili (ty, ze)	1
Struggling	1
Suddenly	1
Survive	1
Teetering	1
Threatened	1
Tough	1
Unfair	1
Worse	1

Table A.3 Exhibit text panels at GWBPL, Hurricane Katrina.

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Damaged	2
Deadliest	1
Destroyed	1
Destructive	1
Determination	1
Devastat (ed, ing, ion)	2
Difficult	1
Important	1
Largest	1
Leadership	1
Practical	1
Ravaged	2
Serious	1
Severe	1
Unexpected	1
Vulnerable	1

Table A.4 Exhibit Text Panels at GWBPL, Financial Crisis

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Confidence	1
Crisis	2
Critical	1
Fail (ed, ing, ure)	5
Falling	1
Free	3
Helped	1
Hope	1
Imminent	1
Insufficient	1
Largest	1
Overvalued	1
Panic	2
Prosperity	1
Shortage	1
Subsided	1
Unexpected	1

Table A.5 Primary Source Media from Hurricane Katrina

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Abandonment	1
Abductive	1
Active	1
Adamant	1
Aggressive	1
Angr (y, ily)	2
Anguish	1
Awkward	1
Bad	1
Bafflement	1
Better	4
Bitter	2
Bloated	1
Botched	4
Broad	1
Bumbling	1
Bungl (ed, ing)	3
Burden	1
Calamity	3
Carefully	2
Catastroph (e, ic)	4
Challenge	1
Chaotic	1
Clear	1
Compassionate	1
Complexity	1
Comprehensive	1
Confidence	1
Confident	1
Confused	1
Conservative	1
Continued	1
Cool	1
Costliest	2
Crisis	1
Critical	2
Criticism	1
Cruised	1
Cynicism	1
Damaged	2
Dangerous	1
Deadly	1
Decisiveness	1
Defending	1

(Continued)

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Defense	1
Delay (ed)	2
Dependent	1
Deserted	1
Desperation	1
Destroyed	1
Destruction	1
Devastat (ed, ing, ion)	13
Difficult	1
Dire	2
Disaster	5
Disingenuously	1
Dismal	2
Divisions	2
Dysfunctional	1
Egregious	1
Elevate	1
Embarrass (ment)	3
Empathy	1
Essential	1
Evident	2
Exclusive	1
Extensive	1
Extreme	1
Fail (ed, ure, ures)	2
Fair	2
Fancy	1
Faster	4
Fault	1
Fault lines	1
Favorable	1
Feel good	1
Fell short	2
Festering	1
Finest	1
Flawed	3
Flood ravaged	1
Foolish	1
Fragile	1
Friendly	1
Frivolity	1
Froze	1
Frustrated	1
Full	1
Fury	1

(Continued)

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Good	1
Grand	1
Gratitude	1
Guilty	1
Halting	1
Hapless	1
Hard	1
Harsh	1
Hasty	1
Heavy	1
Hell	1
Horrific	1
Hurricane-battered	1
Ill-prepared	1
Inability	1
Inadequate	3
Inappropriate	1
Incompeten (t, ence)	5
Insensitive	1
Instrumental	1
Intuitive	1
Lack	1
Lawlessness	1
Lead-balloon	1
Lifeless	1
Littered	1
Long simmering	1
Long term	1
Loose	1
Low	1
Low regard	1
Luxury	1
Major	1
Matched	1
Mayhem	1
Meaningless	1
Miserable	1
Misery	1
Monumental	1
Natural	1
Natural catastrophe(s)	2
Natural disaster(s)	5
Negligence	2
Nightmare	1
Nonchalant	1

(Continued)

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Obliterated	1
Oblivious	4
Obsolete	1
Optimistic	1
Overcrowded	1
Overreaching	1
Perfect	1
Personal	1
Poor	1
Positive	1
Powerful	1
Predictable	1
Pressure	1
Promising	1
Quick(ly)	2
Rampant	1
Rare	3
Ravaged	3
Real	1
Relief	1
Reluctant	1
Restraint	2
Right	3
Rightful	1
Robust	1
Romantic	1
Rumbling	1
Sad	1
Safe	1
Sagging	1
Scrambling	1
Scuttle	1
Self-sufficient	1
Sensitive	1
Serious(ly)	3
Severely	1
Sharp	2
Shine	1
Shockingly	1
Shortchanging	1
Shortcomings	1
Shuttered	1
Significant	1
Slow (er, ly)	15
Sluggish	3

(Continued)

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Sour	1
Stalled	1
Stern	1
Storm-battered	1
Storm-damaged	2
Storm-ravaged	1
Strains	1
Strange	1
Stronger(ly)	2
Stumbling	1
Stunned	1
Stutter-start	1
Successful	2
Sudden	1
Surpassed	1
Teary-eyed	1
Temporary	1
Tense	1
Tepid	1
Terrible	1
Testy	1
Too long	1
Tragedy	2
Trashed	1
Trickle	1
Unfair	1
Unprecedented	1
Unpreparedness	1
Unquotable	1
Unusual	1
Violent	1
Wasteful	1
Watershed	1
Well	1
Wisely	1
Worst	3
Wrong	2

Table A.6 Primary Source Media from the financial crisis.

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Accelerating	1
Accidentally	1
Adamant	1
Adequacy	1
Affordable	1
Ailing	1
Alarmist	1
Ample	1
Angry	1
Available	1
Awry	1
Bad (ly)	3
Balanced	1
Belly up	1
Better	1
Big	2
Biggest	4
Bipartisan	2
Bold	2
Breakdown	1
Brief	1
Broad	3
Broken road	1
Bucked	1
Cajoled	1
Calamity	1
Career-low	1
Cataclysm	1
Catastroph (e, ic, ically)	3
Chilling	1
Clarity	1
Closely	1
Cold	1
Collapse	2
Complex	1
Comprehensive	2
Compromise	1
Concerns	1
Confidence	4
Conservative	1
Controversial	2
Conviction	1
Crashing	1
Crazy	1

(Continued)

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Crippled	1
Crisis	12
Critical	2
Crucial	3
Danger	1
Decisive	1
Deepe (ned, r)	2
Defeat	3
Delicate	1
Delinquent	1
Desperate	1
Deterioration	1
Difficult	1
Dimming	1
Dire	2
Disapprove	1
Disarray	1
Disaster	2
Dismal	1
Disproportionately	1
Dissatisfaction	1
Distressed	2
Distrust	1
Dizzying	1
Doubted	1
Dour	1
Down	2
Downpour	1
Dramatic (ally)	5
Drastic	1
Drawn	2
Dwindled	1
Easily	1
Enormous	2
Enthusiasm	1
Essential	2
Exhausted	1
Expansion	1
Extensive	1
Extraordinary	1
Fail (ed, ure, ures)	15
Faltering	1
Fear	3
Fell sharply	1
Fell short	1

(Continued)

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Fiery	1
Folly	1
Foolish	1
Frantic	1
Frazzled	1
Fresh	1
Frightening	1
Froze (n)	2
Frustrated	2
Giant (s)	2
Gravity	1
Great	1
Greed (y)	2
Grim	2
Grow (ing, th)	2
Hard	1
Harshly	1
Haste	1
Havoc	1
Heavily	2
High (est)	3
Historic	2
Huge	1
Immediate (ly)	3
Imminent danger	1
Impassioned	1
Impending doom	1
Imperfect	1
Impotence	1
Incremental	1
Insidious	1
Intense	1
Intrusion	1
Irresponsible	2
Key	1
Lame duck	4
Lamest	1
Large (st, r)	4
Lasting	2
Late	1
Loom	1
Loss	1
Lost trust	1
Low (er, est)	7
Mad	1

(Continued)

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Major	2
Massive	5
Meltdown	1
Mess	1
Misguided	1
More	1
Necessary	1
Nontraditional	1
Not enough	1
Not hard enough	1
Obscure	1
Ominous	1
Optimistic	1
Overwhelmingly	1
Painful	2
Palatable	1
Partisan	1
Pejorative	1
Pivotal	1
Plummet (ed)	2
Plung (ed, ing)	3
Positively	1
Powerful	2
Pragmatic	1
Pressing	1
Pressure	1
Problematic	2
Promptly	1
Prosperity	1
Quick (ly)	4
Raucous	1
Record low	1
Reeling	1
Relief	2
Remarkable	1
Resentment	1
Retreads	1
Risk (ier)	3
Rocked	1
Roil (ed, ing)	2
Rushed	1
Scandal (s, ous)	2
Scared	1
Scrambled	1
Sharp (ly)	3

(Continued)

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Shocking	1
Significant	1
Skeptic (al, ism)	6
Slew	1
Slow	4
Soaring	2
Soon	1
Stability	2
Standstill	1
Starkest	3
Stern	1
Stressed	1
Striking	2
Strode	1
Strong	1
Struggling	1
Stumbles	1
Stunning	2
Subprime	1
Successful	1
Sweeping	3
Sweeteners	1
Swings	1
Tailspin	1
Tanked	2
Tepid	1
Terrible	4
Thaw	1
Tone-deaf	1
Toppled	1
Tough (er)	3
Train wreck	1
Troubled	11
Tumultuous	1
Turbulent	1
Turmoil	1
Turning against	1
Ugly	1
Unable	1
Unacceptable	1
Uncertain	1
Unclear	1
Undercutting	1
Undermine	2
Uneven	1

(Continued)

Descriptive Words	Appearances
Unexpected	1
Unpopular	1
Unprecedented	4
Unsuccessful	1
Untenable	1
Unusual	1
Urg (ency, ent, ing)	5
Utterly	1
Vanishing	2
Vast	3
Violent	1
Visceral	1
Vowed	1
Warnings	1
Weak (ened)	3
Widely	1
Widespread	1
Wipe (d) out	3
Wors (e, t)	5
Worthless	1
Wreckage	1

APPENDIX B

George W. Bush Presidential Library Gallery Text

B.1 Hurricane Katrina Text Panels

Crisis Management:

“We have often been reminded that nature is an awesome force, and that all life is fragile... Every time, the people of this land have come back from fire, flood, and storm to build a new – and to build better than what we had before.” President George W. Bush, Jackson Square, New Orleans, Louisiana, September 15, 2005

Photo Caption: President George W. Bush comforts Hurricane Katrina victims, Biloxi, Mississippi, September 2, 2005.

Sometimes a President’s most difficult challenges are dealing with the unexpected. In the face of national emergency, the nation looks to the President for leadership.

In 2005, the nation faced one of the most devastating hurricanes in U.S. history. In 2008, the nation faced the most serious financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930’s.

President Bush met each crisis by working to restore order and proving practical plans for recovery.

Hurricane Katrina:

What Made Hurricane Katrina Unique?

Hurricane Katarina was one of the largest and deadliest hurricanes in U.S. history.

The hurricane caused approximately \$125 billion in damages and killed an estimated 1,800 people.

Fighting the Storm:

Before the storm made its final landfall:

- An estimated 1 million people evacuated from the Gulf Region.
- Sixty-five National Guard helicopters and hundreds of trucks carrying food, water, and ice were positioned throughout the region.

After the storm:

- Search and rescue teams from the Coast Guard, National Guard, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and other agencies worked with state and local responders.
- The Coast Guard rescued or evacuated an estimated 33,500 people, while the National Guard rescued or evacuated 87,000 people.

[PHOTO]

Photo Caption: National Guardsman Sergeant Rick Wheelington pushes a boat full of children toward the entrance of the Superdome during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, August 31, 2005, in New Orleans, Louisiana.

The Aftermath:

The Stafford Act, the federal law governing disaster relief, requires state officials to take the lead during a natural disaster. Hurricane Katrina overwhelmed response efforts in Louisiana, which led to criticism of President Bush and other officials. After Hurricane Katrina, reforms were made to how the federal government responds to natural disasters and how states prepare for them.

The federal government provided \$120.7 billion for recovery, disaster response, levee repair, flood protection, health care, housing, education, and relocation assistance.

Flip through the book to learn more about President and Mrs. Bush's visits to the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina.

Wall Panels:

The National Guard
Rescued 87,000

\$120.7 billion
For recovery

The Coast Guard
Rescued 33,500

“Katrina exposed serious problems in our response capability at all levels of government.... I want to know what went right and what went wrong’ President George W. Bush, East Room of the White House, September 13, 2005”

Katrina's Destructive Path

“Hurricane Katrina formed near the Bahamas on August 23, 2005 and made its first landfall in southern Florida two days later. While crossing into the Gulf of Mexico, it intensified into a Category 5 storm – the most severe rating – with winds topping 175 miles per hour. On Monday, August 29, the storm made landfall near the border separating Louisiana and Mississippi.”

Areas Hardest Hit by Hurricane Katrina

“Throughout the area hit by the hurricane, we will do what it takes, we will stay as long as it takes, to help citizens rebuild their communities and their lives.’ President George W. Bush, Jackson Square, New Orleans, Louisiana, September 15, 2005.”

A Vulnerable City

“New Orleans is almost entirely surrounded by water – Lake Pontchartrain, the Mississippi River, and the Gulf of Mexico – and some parts of the city sit 8 feet below sea level. The city’s 350-mile levee system had been designed decades earlier. Hurricane Katrina breached levees and flood walls in more than 50 locations in the city, causing massive flooding. A day after the hurricane made landfall, 80 percent of the city was underwater, with some neighborhoods flooded to the rooftops.

B.2 Hurricane Katrina Timeline Book

PAGE 1: President and Mrs. Bush’s visits to the gulf coast after Hurricane Katrina

PAGE 2: “Greeting people receiving food and water at a Salvation Army relief area in a Biloxi, Mississippi, neighborhood devastated by Hurricane Katrina, September 2, 2005”

PAGE 3: “‘I’m not going to forget what I’ve seen. I understand the devastation requires more than one day’s attention. It’s going to require the attention of this country for a long period of time.’ President George W. Bush, Kenner (near New Orleans), Louisiana, September 2, 2005”

PAGE 4: “2005 September 2, President Bush tours neighborhoods damaged by Hurricane Katrina, in Biloxi, Mississippi. [PHOTO] Spending a moment with Patrick Wright on the steps of what remains of his home in Biloxi, Mississippi, September 2, 2005”

PAGE 5: September 2, 2005, Laura W. Bush visits those affected by Hurricane Katrina in the Cajundome in Lafayette Louisiana.”

PAGE 6: “‘Children who have been displaced because of Hurricane Katrina are starting school this week. It’s really important for parents to make sure their children go to school. It’s important for their children to have a normal life, to have the structure and the routine of going to school, and especially, since many children have suffered...So it’s important to have the save structure that a school gives you.’ Laura W. Bush, Greenbrook Elementary School, Southaven, Mississippi, September 8, 2005”

PAGE 7: “September 8, 2005 Laura W. Bush visits Greenbrook Elementary School in Southaven, Mississippi.”

PAGE 8: “2005 September 12 President Bush tours a hurricane ravaged neighborhood in New Orleans, Louisiana, with state and local officials.”

PAGE 9: “September 12, 2005 President Bush visits a food distribution center in Gulfport, Mississippi.”

PAGE 10: “2005 September 15, President Bush and Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour receive a briefing from Chevron Refinery Manager Roland Kell in Pascagoula, Mississippi”

PAGE 11: “September 15, 2005, President Bush discusses addresses the nation from Jackson Square, New Orleans.”

PAGE 12: “2005 September 19, Mrs. Bush visits families displaced by Hurricane Katarina at the House of Tiny Treasures in Houston, Texas”

PAGE 13: “September 20, 2005, Aboard the USS Iwo Jima in New Orleans, President Bush participates in a briefing on Hurricane Rita – another storm heading to the Gulf Coast region.”

PAGE 14: “2005 September 27, Mrs. Bush hands out meals during a visit to the Salvation Army Discovery Recovery Center in Biloxi, Mississippi”

PAGE 15: “October 10, 2005, President and Mrs. Bush walk with Lt. General Russel Honoré, left, and Plaquemines Parish President Benny Rousselle, right, upon their arrival at the U.S. Naval Air Station, Joint Reserve Base in New Orleans, Louisiana.”

PAGE 16: “2005 October 11, President George W. Bush joins volunteers at a Habitat for Humanity building site in Covington, Louisiana.”

PAGE 17: “October 11, 2005, Mrs. Bush visits a Habitat for Humanity building site in Covington, Louisiana.”

PAGE 18: “2005 October 11, President Bush spends time with students at Delisle Elementary School in Pass Christian, Mississippi. The school had just reopened after Hurricane Katrina.”

PAGE 19: “December 12, 2005, Laura W. Bush and Santa Claus meet with children at a Toys for Tots event in Metairie, Louisiana.”

PAGE 20: “2006 January 12, President Bush discusses Gulf Coast reconstruction in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi.”

PAGE 21: “January 26, 2006, Laura W. Bush visits the St. Bernard Unified School in Chalmette, Louisiana, one of her stops on a tour of schools that had recently reopened in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.”

PAGE 22: ““We hope, and we encourage families to make sure your children are in school. Even if you’re not back in your home district, make sure your children are going to school wherever they are’ Laura W. Bush, St. Bernard Unified School, Chalmette, Louisiana, January 26, 2006:”

PAGE 23: “March 8, 2006, Laura W. Bush announces the Gulf Coast School Library Recovery Initiative while meeting with students President Bush at the College Park Elementary School in Gautier, Mississippi. The initiative was established by the Laura

Bush Foundation for American Libraries and helps schools rebuild library collections destroyed by the storm.”

PAGE 24: ““This initiative will help Gulf Coast schools that were damaged by hurricanes rebuild their books and materials collections for their school libraries...According to the U.S. Department of Education, 1,121 public and private schools in the Gulf Coast region were damaged or destroyed.’ Laura W. Bush, College Park Elementary School, Gautier, Mississippi, March 8, 2006”

PAGE 25: “April 10, 2006, Mrs. Bush speaks to the Urban League of Greater New Orleans.”

PAGE 26: “2006 April 27, President Bush talks with homeowner Ethel Williams during a visit to her damaged home in the 9th Ward of New Orleans.” [PHOTO]

PAGE 27: “August 28, 2006, [PHOTO] President Bush is reunited with Bronwynne and Kim Bassier of Biloxi, Mississippi, left, August 26, 2008, whom he first met during his walking tour of the same neighborhood following Hurricane Katrina in September 2005.”

PAGE 28: “2006 August 28, Mrs. Bush meets with student at Beauvoir Elementary School in Biloxi, Mississippi.” [PHOTO]

PAGE 29: “August 29, 2006, President and Mrs. Bush host an outdoor luncheon for approximately 50 Habitat for Humanity volunteers in appreciation of their work building homes in New Orleans’ 9th Ward.” [PHOTO]

PAGE 30: “2007 January 9, Laura W. Bush speaks at the Louisiana Children’s Museum in New Orleans.” [PHOTO]

PAGE 31: “February 22, 2007, After visiting the Boys and Girls Club of the Gulf Coast Program, Mrs. Bush meets with student at D’Iberville Elementary School in D’Iberville, Mississippi.” [PHOTO]

PAGE 32: “2007 March 1, President Bush meets with students at the Samuel J. Green charter school in New Orleans.” [PHOTO]

PAGE 33: “April 19, 2007, At the Holy Cross School in New Orleans, Mrs. Bush announces \$502,000 in grants awarded to Gulf Coast school libraries through the Laura Bush Foundation for America’s Libraries.” [PHOTO]

PAGE 34: “2007 August 29, President and Mrs. Bush and Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco visit the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School for Science and Technology in New Orleans.” [PHOTO]

PAGE 35: “November 1, 2007, Mrs. Bush visits the Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Southeast Louisiana.” [PHOTO]

PAGE 36: “‘The Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Southeast Louisiana understands the importance of mentors. You know your work is especially important here on the Gulf Coast, where children who lost their homes, their belongings, their friends, and their schools in the hurricanes need the permanence and the encouragement of a mentor.’ Laura W. Bush, Good Shepherd Nativity Mission School, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 1, 2007” [PHOTO]

PAGE 37: “November 2, 2007, Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour left, looks on as Laura W. Bush speaks to fifth-grade students about coastal conservation at the J.L. Scott Marine Education center in Ocean Springs, Mississippi.” [PHOTO]

PAGE 38: “2008 March 3, At Henry C. Schaumburg Elementary in New Orleans, Mrs. Bush awards grants to schools that are in Louisiana’s Recovery School District. [PHOTO] Participating in a discussion with New Orleans’ young professional leaders at Idea Village, New Orleans, Louisiana, March 3, 2008.”

PAGE 39: “‘Today, as we celebrate these awards, I also want to encourage schools throughout the whole Gulf Coast to apply for Foundation grants. As soon as schools are up and ready, be sure to apply so you can fill your library with a good, new, big collection of books for your students. Rebuilt schools need rebuild libraries. And rebuilt libraries will help bring children back to their schools. And rebuilt schools will bring families back to the Gulf Coast.’ Laura W. Bush, Henry C. Schaumburg School, New Orleans, Louisiana, March 3, 2008”

PAGE 40: “‘Libraries and museums in this region still play a very, very important role. Their collections are still preserving communities’ stories and memories. So, while physical buildings have been destroyed, the people of the Gulf Coast will never be far from home.’ Laura W. Bush, Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans, Louisiana, May 30, 2008” [PHOTO]

PAGE 41: “May 30, 2008, Laura W. Bush visits the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans to recognize the winners of Institute of Museum and Library Services grants.” [PHOTO]

PAGE 42: “2008 August 20, President Bush meets with community leaders in Gulfport Mississippi. [PHOTO] Joined by Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour, left, and Gulfport, Mississippi Mayor Brent Warr, right, to discuss the continued recovery efforts three years after Hurricane Katrina.”

PAGE 43: “August 20, 2008, At the historic Jackson Barracks in New Orleans, President Bush honors residents and community leaders for their determination to rebuild their communities three years after Hurricane Katrina. [PHOTO] Embracing New Orleans chef and restaurant owner Leah Chase at Jackson Barracks in New Orleans.”

PAGE 44: “‘Your library is precisely what brings me here today. Over the past seven years ... the Laura Bush Foundation for America’s Libraries has given over \$10 million

in grants to more than 1,000 United States public school libraries. And this includes more than \$3.5 million that's been given directly to schools on the Gulf Coast to help rebuild their library collections after the hurricanes. And today, I'm here with more good news...we're presenting another million dollars in new grants to 22 schools here on the Gulf Coast for their libraries.' Laura W. Bush, John Dibert Elementary School, New Orleans, Louisiana, October 30, 2008”

PAGE 45: “October 30, 2008 [PHOTO] Joined by homeowner Joretta Roman as she views a renovation project at Roman's home in New Orleans, during a tour of homes being renovated by Catholic Charities Operation Helping Hands.”

B.3 Financial Crisis Text Panels

Financial Crisis

Timeline:

March 16, 2008: JPMorgan Chase & Co. buys failing Wall Street investment bank Bear Stearns.

July 30, 2008: President Bush signs into law new regulations for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

September 7, 2008: Federal officials place Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac into conservatorship.

September 14, 2008: Bank of America buys failing Wall Street investment bank Merrill Lynch & Co.

September 15, 2008: Lehman Brothers, the fourth-largest investment bank in the United States, files for bankruptcy protection.

September 20, 2008: President Bush submits to Congress the Troubled Asset Relief Program, or TARP, designed to stabilize financial institutions.

September 29, 2008: The House rejects the proposed TARP legislation.

October 1, 2008: The Senate passes revised TARP legislation.

October 3, 2008: The House passes TARP; the President signs it into law.

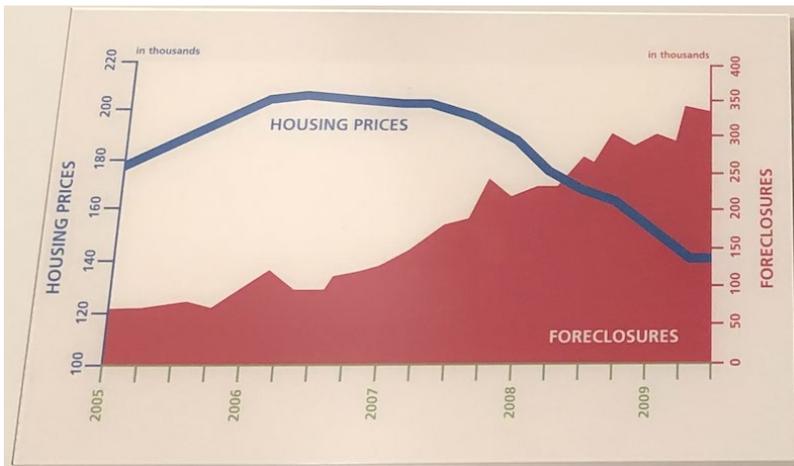
Under President Bush, the TARP program spent \$294 billion (out of \$700 billion originally authorized) to shore up financial institutions. As of March 2011, \$277 billion of the funds spent under TARM had been paid back to the U.S. Treasury.

The Housing Bubble



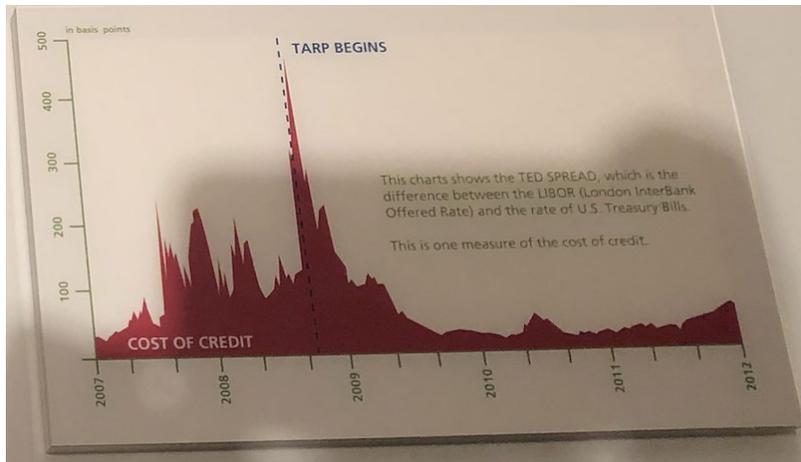
Too much investment in housing created a bubble that bust in 2006.

The Start of the Crisis



Falling home prices led to a large unexpected increase in foreclosures, which caused banks holding mortgages to fail.

The Panic Ends



Confidence began to return to markets after the Troubled Asset Relief Program was passed by Congress.

Wall Panels:

The Problem

“The 2008 financial crisis had multiple causes. A surge of capital from overseas and bad lending practices combined to create a housing bubble.

The world’s largest financial institutions bet that housing prices would continue to rise and held insufficient capital reserves in case they were wrong.

When housing prices began to fall, investors feared that a wide range of financial securities were overvalued.”

“‘The long-term solution to today’s problems is sustained economic growth, and the surest path to that growth is free markets and free people.’ President George W. Bush, Federal Hall National Memorial, New York City, November 13, 2008”

“I’m a strong believe in free enterprise. So, my natural instinct is to oppose government intervention. But these are not normal circumstances.” President George W. Bush, Address to the Nation, State Floor of the White House, September 24, 2008.

The Crisis:

“As home prices fell and mortgage defaults increased, investors withdrew capital from the financial markets.

Some financial firms failed, and others stopped lending to each other. Panic engulfed financial markets.

As a result, many businesses faced a critical shortage of capital needed to make payroll and conduct normal business.”

The Solution:

The Federal Reserve and the Treasury took steps to shore up the financial markets, including using the Troubled Asset Relief Program to inject capital into financial firms, which helped restore the flow of money and credit.

By early 2009, the panic had subsided, and the danger of imminent collapse had passed.

“The crisis was not a failure of the free market system. The answer is ... to fix the problems we face, make the reforms we need, and move forward with the free market principles that have delivered prosperity and hope to people all across the globe”
President George W. Bush Federal Hall National Memorial, New York City, November 13, 2008.

APPENDIX C

Decision Points Theater Transcripts

C.1 Hurricane Katrina

JB: Welcome to the Decision Points Theater, I'm Josh Bolten. I served President Bush as Chief of Staff from 2006 to 2009.

AC: And I'm Andy Card, and I served President Bush as his Chief of Staff from 2001-2006. George W. Bush made many tough decisions as president, now you'll get a flavor for what that's like.

JB: Take a look at the list of scenarios in front of you, first you will select which one you want to tackle, you'll get a briefing, hear expert policy advice, and vote on what to do.

AC: The experts will not agree among themselves, but your job is to make a decision. You'll have to work fast, this experience is timed, and you may be interrupted by late breaking news.

JB: Let's get started. Use the touch screen to choose one of the decision points.

JB: The majority of the theater chose: Hurricane Katrina

Anchor A: One of the most powerful hurricanes in several decades

Anchor B: The levy broke yesterday, another levy broke today

Anchor C: Water is rising so fast

Anchor D: There's no food, no water, no electricity

E: Looters run loose in the streets, police overwhelmed by search and rescue operations

F: We have never seen anything like this in the United States of America

AC: The Federal Emergency Management Agency is helping state and local response efforts, however officials in New Orleans are overwhelmed. The President can send in troops, but those troops would serve in a supporting role to state efforts and would not have law enforcement powers. Unless the President invokes what's called the Insurrection Act.

President Bush had to make a choice,

1. Rely on the National Guard and local police.
2. Send in federal troops, in supporting role, with no law enforcement authority.
3. Invoke the insurrection act and send troops to restore order.

You are about to select expert advice from a variety of people. Just as President Bush did, you will have to weigh conflicting points of view.

On your touchscreen each of you can record your reaction using the slider bar. At your station you will see how your reactions may impact your ultimate decision. And here on the main screen, you'll see a combined view of all the players in the theater.

Ok, we're ready to start. Work fast, the clock is ticking.

Expert Choice 1, White House:

A: The city's resources are overwhelmed. The police cannot cope with the crisis and Americans are facing lawlessness and chaos. We need to send in federal troops and declare the city in a state of insurrection, so our troops have the legal authority they need to restore order.

B: Invoking the insurrection act would be a mistake. Federal law requires that city and state officials take the lead in a natural disaster for good reason. And, if you invoke the insurrection act, you'll lose the political support you need to respond to this crisis.

Expert 2, City Police:

A: This crisis is too big for the local police. Do you realize many police officers are missing? They're probably out trying to save their own families from the flood waters. Meanwhile, my city is in a state of complete lawlessness. Now we need help now.

B: The crisis doesn't call for sending in armed federal troops. It calls for sending in more supplies and people to distribute food and water so that police officers can concentrate on restoring order.

BREAKING NEWS:

It's getting increasingly chaotic in New Orleans. The city's homeland security chief says there are gangs of armed men moving around the city.

Expert 3, Pentagon:

A: Look, federal troops aren't trained police officers. There's a danger that sending them in will put them in harm's way without the ability to defend themselves or the training necessary to apprehend violent criminals.

B: Federal troops are trained to handle disasters they can bolster the efforts of law enforcement officials. If arrests need to be made, federal troops can work with local or state police officers.

BREAKING NEWS:

A: The convention center is unsanitary and unsafe.

B: Thousand and thousands of people have been there and that's where people are going for help and there just simply is none for them.

Expert 4, Defense Department:

A: Federal troops aren't trained to do the law enforcement job of policemen. It's best if the local police and the national guard handle this. There should be enough National Guard troops in the region to restore order.

B: This is an emergency we need to send federal troops in right away.

BREAKING NEWS:

A: FEMA has suspended rescue operations.

B: There are snipers taking shots at medivac helicopters.

C: They say it's simply too dangerous to go out there.

Expert 5, State Government:

A: A crisis is no time to rewrite long-standing federal law that determines the chain of command during a natural disaster. Don't federalize a disaster zone. We will have a better result if the local national guard commander continues to report to the governor.

B: No one is in charge and lawlessness is rampant in the city. We need a clear chain of command. We also need federal intervention, and someone who can cut through the chaos. That person can only be the President of the United States.

Expert 6, Military:

A: We need a clear chain of command to accommodate state government's concerns. Put a local National Guard officer in charge. That guard officer will report to the governor on issues related to the Guard and to the President on issues that relate to federal troops.

B: Federal law requires the president to take a supporting role in a natural disaster. This is the Governors responsibility. And the Governor wants to retain command of all military and state law enforcement personnel in the area. You need to help the Governor, not take command of the situation

AC: Time's up. It's time to make a decision.

AC: You were asked how to restore order in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. You had three options. The people in the theater today decided to send in federal troops in a supporting role with no law enforcement authority. Here's what President Bush did.

GB: When Hurricane Katrina flooded New Orleans in 2005, I chose to send in Federal Troops without law enforcement authority. It became clear during the crisis that local and state officials were overwhelmed and that the governor of the state was not going to relinquish authority to the federal government. So, I sent 7,000 federal troops into New Orleans, but did not give them the ability to act as law enforcement officers. I decided that sending in federal troops with diminished authority was better than sending in no federal troops at all. It was what the crisis required, and the troops helped restore order in the city.

C.2 Financial Crisis

JB: Welcome to the Decision Points Theater, I'm Josh Bolten. I served President Bush as Chief of Staff from 2006 to 2009.

AC: And I'm Andy Card, and I served President Bush as his Chief of Staff from 2001-2006. George W. Bush made many tough decisions as president, now you'll get a flavor for what that's like.

JB: Take a look at the list of scenarios in front of you, first you will select which one you want to tackle, you'll get a briefing, hear expert policy advice, and vote on what to do.

AC: The experts will not agree among themselves, but your job is to make a decision. You'll have to work fast, this experience is timed, and you may be interrupted by late breaking news.

JB: Let's get started. Use the touch screen to choose one of the decision points.

JB: The majority of the theater chose: The Financial Crisis

News Anchor A: Crippling mortgage crisis.

News Anchor B: Homeownership threatened.

News Anchor C: Lehman Brothers has filed for the biggest bankruptcy in history.

News Anchor D: Extremely extremely nervous markets

JB: Housing markets have collapsed which has signaled to the world that a large variety of assets are overpriced. As a result, large financial institutions are teetering on the brink of collapse. The financial crisis has led to a panic as banks and other financial institutions have stopped lending money to each other. There is a real risk that the entire financial system could collapse. President Bush had to make a choice:

1. Allow financial institutions to fail and let markets stabilize on their own.
2. Use federal tax dollars to stabilize financial institutions.

You are about to select expert advice from a variety of people. Just as President Bush did, you will have to weigh conflicting points of view. On your touch screen, each of you can record your reaction using the slider bar. At your station, you will see how your reactions may impact your ultimate decision. And, here on the main screen, you will see a combined view of all of the players in the theater.

Ok, we're ready to start. Work fast, the clock is ticking.

Expert Choice 1, Business Community:

A: Our nation is facing a crisis but spending hundreds of billions of dollars to rescue Wall Street is a mistake! We can't afford it! In the end it will benefit financial executives at the expense of taxpayers.

B: Using federal funds to stabilize banks and other financial institutions will stabilize the economy and that will unfreeze credit markets which will enable businesses to make payroll and carry out day to day operations.

Expert Choice 2, Treasury Department:

A: We should let the market work, the fall out could be severe, but it's not the government's role to bail out those who acted irresponsibly. If we bail out bad actors, we give them an incentive to game the system at taxpayer expense.

B: Large financial institutions have already failed. There is a panic in financial markets that threatens to collapse our whole system. We need to restore stability now by investing a large amount of federal dollars. This will end the panic and give the markets a chance to recover.

BREAKING NEWS:

Suddenly the reserve steps in again to help Wall Street. Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs essentially becoming traditional banks. They'll all be subject to a lot more regulation

Expert Choice 3, House of Representative:

A: We're facing a crisis of historic proportions; dramatic action is necessary, or we could fall into a second great depression. Once the crisis is over, the treasury can recoup federal funds invested in financial institutions and allow the markets to return to normal.

B: It is not the proper role for the federal government to inject capital into private business. Even in a crisis. Plus, the Treasury is asking for a blank check on short notice. Hundreds of billions of dollars could be wasted.

Expert Choice 4, Senate:

A: There is no guarantee that investing in the financial system will stem panic and the taxpayers will get their money back. We shouldn't shield financial institutions from the consequences of their mistakes.

B: Hundreds of billions of dollars is a small amount of money to risk when compared to the cost of allowing our financial system to collapse. If we save the system, these institutions will be able to pay taxpayers back.

BREAKING NEWS:

Anchor A: The largest single day point drop ever in U.S. history.

Anchor B: Credit markets have seized up, there's virtually no American who's not feeling this one way or another.

Expert Choice 5, Taxpayers:

A: The federal government shouldn't spend my money to bail out the people on Wall Street. They caused this crisis. Instead, the government should be helping struggling homeowners.

B: Helping Wall Street helps Main Street we all need a working financial system. If the crisis continues, businesses will fail, and we may face a huge recession, or worse, a great depression.

BREAKING NEWS:

This financial crisis is not just restricted to US shores, the global economy is slowing, no one wants to lend so it's coming back to bite everybody.

Expert Choice 6, Wall Street Bankers:

A: The government needs to back stop the entire system. If only troubled banks get federal money, it could cause a run on those banks and make the crisis worse. Healthy banks can quickly repay the federal funds without additional government controls.

B: Some financial institutions have more than enough capital to survive the crisis. It may help stop the panic but it's unfair to make them take federal money. They'll face new government restrictions even though they've acted responsibly.

JB: Time's up. It's time to make a decision.

JB: You were asked how to address the financial crisis. You had two options. The people in the theater today decided to use federal tax dollars to stabilize financial institutions. Here's what President Bush did:

GB: In the financial crisis of 2008 I chose to use federal tax dollars to stabilize financial institutions. I was angry that our largest financial institutions would put us at risk of falling into a great depression, but that did not change the fact that if our financial system collapsed, a lot of Americans were going to get hurt. We needed to end the panic in financial markets. So, I decided the federal government would inject taxpayer dollars into the banking system. This helped restore order and confidence, freed up more money for banks to lend and gave the financial markets a chance to recover. Ultimately, most of the taxpayer dollars invested during the crisis were repaid to the Treasury.

APPENDIX D

Core Values

Empowering Americans:

‘To every man and woman, a chance to succeed. To every child, a chance to learn. To every family, a chance to live with dignity and hope.’ – Governor George W. Bush, Republican National Convention, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, August 3, 2000

- Education Reform
- Empower Growth
- Faith-Based & Community Initiative

George W. Bush trusted the ingenuity of the American people to solve national problems. As President he worked to pass legislation that would improve the lives of Americans, reform public schools, and strengthen the economy.

President Bush’s *No Child Left Behind Act* was designed to ensure that every child has a quality education.

His tax reforms were based on the conviction that American’s could grow the economy by spending and investing their money more wisely than the government.

And his *Faith-Based* and *Community Initiative* strengthen social services.

The Bush Doctrine:

Take the Fight to the Enemy

Make No Distinction Between Terrorists and the Nations That Harbor Them

Confront Threats Before They Fully Emerge

Advance Freedom

Defending Freedom

“We have known freedom’s price. We have shown freedom’s power. And in this great conflict...we will see freedom’s victory.” – President George W. Bush, State of the Union Address, January 29, 2002

- Defend the Homeland
- Global War on Terror
- Afghanistan & Iraq
- Freedom Agenda

The attacks of September 11th brought the global threat of terrorism into sharp focus and thrust the United States into war. It was clear that defending the nation against the terrorists and their ideology of hatred required new strategies and tools.

In what became known as the Bush Doctrine, the president set the nation on a course to protect the homeland, defeat the terrorists, and make the world safer by expanding freedom. The United States did not suffer another terrorist attack on the homeland while President Bush was in office.

Acting with Compassion

“For people everywhere, the United States, is a partner for a better life.” – President George W. Bush, State of the Union Address, January 31, 2006

- Building a Hopeful World
- Shining a Light

Every human life has dignity and worth, and the United States as a vital national interest in helping overcome devastating diseases and poverty. So, President Bush launched programs to reduce poverty, corruption, HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and neglected tropical diseases in some of the poorest countries in the world.

In 2003, President Bush, working with Congress, launched PEPFAR (the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief). And in 2004, he worked with Congress to launch the *Millennium Challenge Corporation*, which provides funding to countries that make measurable progress improving the lives of their people.

As First Lady, Mrs. Bush traveled to more than 75 countries and 50 states highlighting such issues as women’s rights, illiteracy, breast cancer, and heart disease.

Leading on the Issues

“Strong leadership means rising to the challenges of the day. It also means looking down the road. ... And as leaders, you and I have a responsibility to confront those problems today, and not pass them on to future generations.” – President George W. Bush, South Carolina Statehouse, Columbia, South Carolina, April 18, 2005

- Volunteering
- Protecting the Environment
- Separating Powers
- Crisis Management
- Looking to the Horizon

Some of the problems President Bush faced were unexpected, such as Hurricane Katrina and the financial crisis. Other problems were looming on the horizon before he entered office, such as the need to reform Medicare, immigration, and Social Security.

In each case, President Bush led by defining a vision, articulating principles, listening to others, weighing different options, and making decisions.

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