

Donald W. Reynolds Center Visitor Survey

**Study Highlights and
Frequency Distributions**

Winter 2007



**Smithsonian Institution
Office of Policy and Analysis**



Donald W. Reynolds Center Visitor Survey

February 2007

Study Highlights

The Office of Policy & Analysis (OP&A) is scheduled to conduct three related studies of visitors to the Donald W. Reynolds Center (DWRC). The first study (Winter) was conducted in February 2007. At the time the survey took place, visitation was not particularly high, due in part to inclement weather. The cooperation rate of visitors was good (70%); a total of 282 visitors completed the survey. Individuals who refused cited a need to return to work, previous plans and transportation schedules. There appears to be no perceptible difference between those who cooperated and those who did not. This memo includes highlights from the survey; a set of frequencies is in Attachment A.

➤ The Audience Overall

- Two thirds of visitors were from the Eastern (39% residents of Metropolitan Washington and an additional 28% from New England or Mid Atlantic states).
- The majority (68%) were making an initial visit to DWRC. The rest had visited prior to the renovation (11%) or since it reopened to the public (21%). Of those who were making return visits to the DWRC, half had made more than one visit.
- Almost two-thirds (62%) were women; these women were less likely to be local
- Adults alone (12%) or with others (58%) were the predominant visitor configurations; single adults or couples with young people (under age 18), and a few who came with groups, constituted the rest of the visitors. Half of the visitors were 41 years old or younger, the remainder older. The average age was **41.4**.
- Ninety percent of U. S. visitors considered themselves Caucasian, a few (**2%**) in combination with a minority race. Six percent of U.S. residents indicated that they were of Latino or Hispanic origin.
- These visitors were very well educated, with two-thirds of those over 25, when most are considered to have completed their education, reporting graduate/professional degrees. All but six percent have Bachelor's degrees (over 25).

➤ Rating the Visit

- As shown in Figure 1, on the next page, the overall experience was quite positive: 24 percent rated is as “superior”
- With the exception of “activities and things for children to do,” all of the programmatic aspects of the DWRC received equally high ratings.

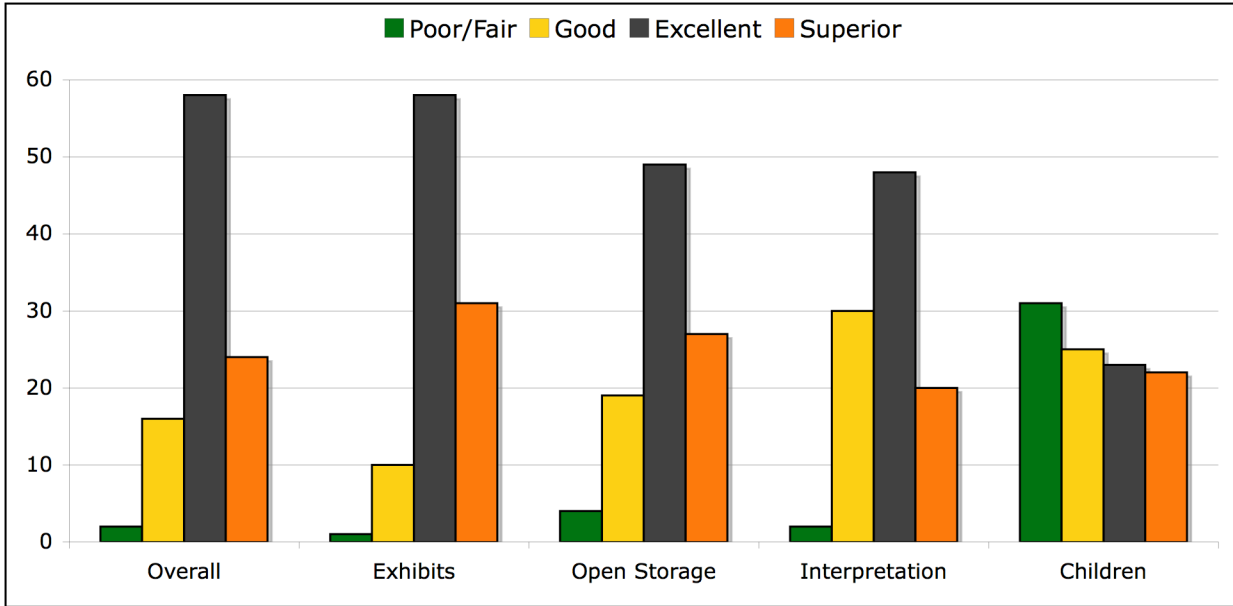


Figure 1. Rating of Overall Visit and Selected Programmatic Components [In Percent]

- Services and amenities were rated slightly lower, especially cafes, as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Rating of Services and Amenities [In Percent]

- For the majority of visitors (58%), the experience was better than expected.
- Overall, first time visitors were less critical, i.e., gave higher ratings, than repeat visitors.
- The DWRC has certainly created a “buzz;” friends and/or family were the main source of information about the Center (32%), with other source of information trailing behind. More than half the visitors (57%) also indicated that they had talked to friends about the DWRC.

➤ Experiences in the DWRC

- Learning something new (81%), Enriching my understanding (75%) and Being moved by beauty (74%) were reported as key experiences.
- The majority agreed that information was visually easy to read (84%) and understand (75%) and that directions were easy to follow (54%).
- Contact with DWRC personnel was more limited. Half indicated that museum staff welcomed them at the entrance, and a similar percent (53%) reported that they or a member of their group stopped at the information desk. One-fourth spoke to museum staff in the building. There was, however, near unanimity (97%) that staff was sensitive to visitor needs.
- Relatively few visitors took advantage of the shops or cafes. Thirty-six percent entered the shops; of these, one-fourth made a purchase. About one-fourth went into a café; of these, half ate there.

➤ Museum Identification

- Visitors were more likely to know that the resident museums are part of the Smithsonian, than they are to know that there are two museums in the building. See Figure 3.

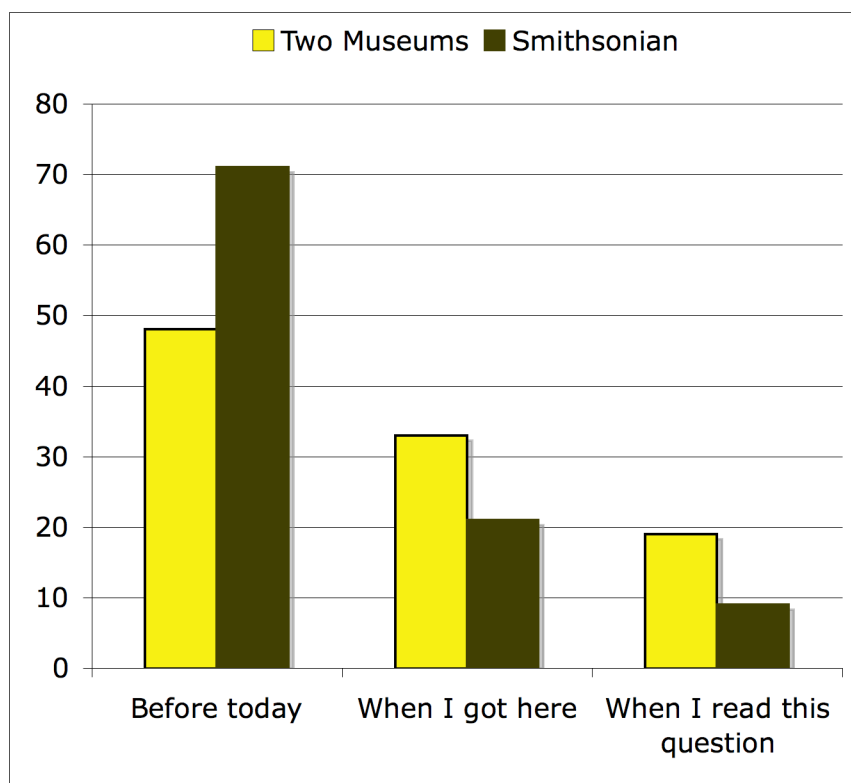


Figure 3. Timing of Awareness of DWRC as Two Museums and Smithsonian Institution

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS [IN PERCENT]



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Notes:

1. If respondents could mark more than one answer for a question, percent totals are not shown.
2. Percents are based only on respondents who answered questions and to which the questions applied. "Not applicable" are excluded from the percents.
3. Question formats modified slightly from actual questionnaires, to facilitate entering data.

1.	Is today your first visit to this specific building?	68 11 11 10 100	Yes No, I last visited before it was renovated No, I made <u>one</u> visit since July 2006 No, I made <u>more than one</u> visit since July 2006
2.	Are you visiting by yourself or with other people?	12 88 100	I am alone I am with others
3.	Other than yourself, how many people are with you? (Write number of people, not ages)		_____ # Adults 18 and over _____ # Youth 12 to 17 _____ # Youth under 12
[See Table A.1, page 8]			
4.	Are you visiting today with an organized group?	98 01 01 100	No Yes, School Yes, Other group
5.	Rate your overall visit experience in this building today.	0 2 16 58 24 100	Poor Fair Good Excellent Superior
6.	Was your experience better or worse than you expected?	1 40 58 100	Worse About as expected Better
7.	What impressed you the most on this visit?	37 5 76 0	The building/restoration Visitor amenities/services The exhibitions and collections None of these
8.	When did you learn that there are two museums in this building?	48 33 19 100	Before I came today When I got here When I read this question
9.	Which museums in this building did you visit today?	12 24 60 4 100	American Art Portrait Gallery Both Not sure

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS [IN PERCENT]

10.	When did you learn that these two museums are Smithsonian museums?	71 21 9 100	Before I came today When I got here When I read this question
11.	Where did you see or hear advertisements about these two museums before visiting today? (Choose one or more)	16 3 12 7 6 1 41 27	Newspaper Radio Magazine Online ad Metro sign Sign on bus Did not see an advertisement Other _____
12.	Where else did you see or hear anything about these two museums before visiting today?	19 5 14 32 0 18 14 15 11	Newspaper story TV/radio story Tourist info Friend/Family Blog Web site Prior visit Wandered past Other _____
13.	Have you talked with any friends about these two museums before today?	42 58 100	No Yes
14.	In this building (Choose one or more)	50 53 54 10	Museum staff welcomed me/us at the entrance I/we stopped at the information desk Directions were easy to follow None of these
15.	In the exhibitions and galleries (Choose one or more)...	84 75 16 52 24 0	Information was visually easy to read Information was easy to understand There was information that I/we wanted about objects but could not find There were adequate places to sit I/we talked with museum staff None of these
16.	How did visitor amenities/services affect your experience?	2 37 60 99	Negatively No effect Positively
17.	During your visit, were staff sensitive to your needs?	3 97 100	No Yes
18.	Did you attend a program or lecture today?	96 4 100	No Yes

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS [IN PERCENT]

19.	Did you see a special or featured exhibition today?	43	No
		57	Yes
		100	
20.	Did you go into a museum store in this building?	64	No
		29	Yes, did not buy
		7	Yes, bought
		100	
21.	Did you go into a café in this building?	77	No
		11	Yes, did not eat
		12	Yes, ate
		100	

22.	Please rate the following in this building today	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Superior</u>	
	Quality of exhibits	0	1	10	58	31	100
	Publicly visible stored artworks (“Open Storage”)	0	4	19	49	27	99
	Explanations and interpretive information	0	2	30	48	20	100
	Activities and things for children to do	10	21	25	23	22	100
	Information desks	0	4	29	51	15	100
	Security officers	2	7	27	44	20	100
	Museum stores	0	6	36	39	19	100
	Cafés	7	21	33	20	19	100
	Restrooms	2	3	22	45	28	100

23.	Today, did you have the following experiences during your visit to this building?	<u>No</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Very Much</u>	
	Enriching my understanding	0	25	75	100
	Introducing children to art/history	20	18	63	101
	Learning something new	2	17	81	100
	Reflecting on the meaning of what I saw	3	28	69	100
	Seeing things in new ways	5	27	68	100
	Socializing with friends/family	8	27	66	99
	Imagining or recalling other times/places	7	27	66	100
	Being moved by beauty	3	22	74	99

24.	Would the following have increased your enjoyment?	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>	
	Staff in galleries to answer questions	64	36	100
	More written information in the exhibits	57	43	100
	Hand-held electronic information devices	61	39	100
	Exhibits to touch or manipulate	49	51	100

25.	Will you visit this building again in the next year?	46	Definitely
		32	Probably
		20	Not likely
		3	No
		100	

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS [IN PERCENT]

26.	Where do you live?	96	United States Zipcode _____
		4	Other country _____
		100	[Also see Table A.2, page 8]

27.	What is your age?	41.4	years [Average]
		41	years [Median]

[Also see Table A.3, page 8]

28.	What is your sex?	62	Female
		38	Male
		100	

29.	What is the highest level of education you have completed?	7	High school or less
		5	One or more years of college, no degree
		3	Associate degree
		30	Bachelor's degree
		56	Graduate/professional

101 [Also see Table A.4, page 8]

30.	Are you of Latino or Hispanic origin? [U.S. visitors only]	94	No
		6	Yes
		100	

31.	What race do you consider yourself? [U.S. visitors only] (Choose one or more)	6	African American
		2	American Indian/Native Alaskan
		5	Asian (Chinese, Indian, Japanese, etc.)
		2	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
		90	White

32. What can we do to make this building more approachable and inviting for Smithsonian visitors?

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS [IN PERCENT]

A.1 Group Composition

Type of Group	Percent
Unaccompanied visitor	12
Adult couple w/o youth	33
Adult group w/o youth	25
Adult couple with youth	13
Adult group with youth	11
One adult with youth	4
Youth group	0
School group	1
Other group	1
Total	100

A.2 Geographic Origins

Area	Percent
New England	16
Mid Atlantic	12
Metro Washington	39
South East	5
South Central	2
North Central	5
Midwest	4
Mountain	2
Pacific	4
Unspecified U.S.	6
Country other than U.S.	4
Total	100

A.3 Age, Five Year Intervals

Age Range	Percent
14-16	1
17-18	3
19-23	0
24-28	13
29-33	7
34-38	12
39-43	9
44-48	13
49-53	10
54-58	10
59-63	12
64-68	5
69-73	1
74-78	3
79-83	1
84+	1
Total	100

A.4 Educational Attainment, Visitors over 25

Educational Attainment	Percent
High school or less	2
One or more years of college, no degree	3
Associate degree	1
Bachelor's degree	29
Graduate/professional	65
Total	100