

**“To Keep the Memories Floating”:
Complexities of Memory Work**

by

Lisa Hareuther

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Approval

Name: Lisa Hareuther
Degree: Master of Arts (Anthropology)
Title of Thesis: *“To Keep the Memories Floating”:
Complexities of Memory Work*
Examining Committee: Chair: Dr. Cindy Patton
Professor

Dr. Dara Culhane
Senior Supervisor
Associate Professor

Dr. Adrienne Burk
Committee Member
Senior Lecturer

Dr. Leslie Robertson
External Examiner
Assistant Professor

Date Defended/Approved: March 07, 2013

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Abstract

This thesis explores, through an ethnographic methodology situated within a living history museum and a military museum, the notion that memories are not 'pre-given' objects but are instead actively created and re-membered in complex and layered ways. Drawing upon interviews, observations, and personal memories of working in the living history museum, I take as a starting point memory work in these two museums related to the World Wars. This thesis considers in turn five key lenses on memory as *work*; that is, how it evolves from labour, crafting, and selection, and is constituted in fluid and dynamic ways. In particular, I consider the blurred boundaries between presumed dichotomies of memory/history and remembering/forgetting, as well as issues of authenticity and performance. This research adds to the relatively scarce scholarly literature on how people working in museums experience and 'perform' memory, as well as argues that memory is a central yet complex aspect of ethnographic fieldwork that requires critical reflexive analysis.

Keywords: memory as work; ethnography; museums; authenticity; performance; memory in ethnographic fieldwork

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Chapter 1.

Introduction

I'm not sure where this began. Was it the hazy recollection of my mother's father, sitting in a rocking chair, talking of being in the war? Or perhaps my father telling me about his grandparents, German immigrants to Canada prior to the First World War, who were nearly interned in their new country during the Second World War? Or maybe it was realizing, during my time working at a museum, the complexities, challenges, and contradictions that take place within museums. It might have also been that growing up in Edmonton, with a military base just north of the city, that I often saw military uniforms. As an ethnographer, I agree that researchers are often led to particular topics and questions about the world though we "may not always know exactly why or how [we] are being drawn in that direction" (Madison 2012: 21). But it is something, somewhere, that has sparked my interest in this project: to explore how memory *works* in museums, and to study this through the lens of studying museum treatments of the World Wars.

My research thus began with an interest in how the World Wars are currently commemorated in my home-city of Edmonton, Alberta. As I surveyed analyses of the ways in which we commemorate and work to remember the World Wars not only in academic research, but also in popular books, graphic novels, documentaries, articles, memoirs, oral history projects, newspaper articles, memorials, artworks, and museums, I became even more fascinated.

Initially, I sought out interviewees who worked at two different museums – the living history museum (Fort Edmonton Park) in which I had worked myself (first as a costumed historical interpreter, and then leading historic school programs) and at a military museum (the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum) – to learn how the World Wars are currently commemorated beyond the very seasonal time of remembrance practices that occur in association with Remembrance Day in November.

What emerged from my conversations with Ryan Mullen and Tom Long – former costumed historical interpreters at Fort Edmonton Park (FEP) – and Maurice White and Hans Brink – veterans and volunteers at the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum (LERMM) – were interesting encounters that spoke to the complexities of memory work, authenticity, and performance in these museums. These encounters also took me beyond the boundaries of the World Wars to more broadly explore how memory *works* in museums.

Perhaps one quick example - given in an interview with Tom Long - illustrates how, and why, my approach deepened. Tom is recounting a teacher's reaction to the performance of an actor, who worked at Fort Edmonton Park, and who developed a play (funded using the same grant for developing the World War I narratives at Fort Edmonton Park) to take around to public schools. In this one-man play the actor portrays an Edmonton World War I soldier who wrote letters to his children of his memories overseas. It was toured around to schools so that the original audience for these letters – children – would also be the main audience of the play:

TL: A teacher [came] up to [the actor] after he'd done his play, which is *really* spectacular, it's sad and funny and heartfelt and, just really amazing - but there are funny parts of it, and this teacher came up to him afterwards and said, I don't think we should be teaching the kids to laugh at people in uniform.

(Interview with Tom Long, December 9, 2011)¹

The teacher's reaction is interesting, but perhaps not surprising, given that the portrayal of the World Wars continues to be contentious, political, and emotionally charged. But what is going on in the teacher's reaction? Is causing children to laugh necessarily about denigrating a man, or simply laughing at the circumstances of an actor wearing a costume portraying a soldier?

As a consequence of noticing such dimensions and subtleties in World War memory-work, I decided my own research design would feature an ethnographic

¹ In November 2012, Fort Edmonton Park uploaded to YouTube, in five parts, the video of this play, entitled "Give My Regards to the Ducks", which had been filmed on location at Fort Edmonton Park in 2009 (Film, 2009, Dir. Bohdan Tarasenko).

analysis of how memory work was extended in two museum spaces. My research was based in descriptions of exhibits, analysis of related documents including on-line and print resources, interviews with museum interpreters about their work including reflections on public performances, school visits, and audience responses to their presentations. I also maintained a reflexive fieldnote journal that contributed to my analyses.

Representing war and other violent conflicts and traumas in museums are political acts (Lehrer et al. (eds) 2011). The processes of representing such events and knowledge create “unique challenges [...] in attempts to frame memories and documents of violence for public display” (Lehrer and Milton 2011: 3) and prompt “international debate about human rights, restitution, and justice” (Andermann and Simine 2012: 10; Winter 2012). Issues related to the display of difficult knowledge within museum exhibits are explored within museum studies and anthropology (Concordia University Centre for Ethnographic Research and Exhibition in the Aftermath of Violence 2013). Many contemporary curatorial practices often aim to structure exhibits in ways which work to “offer multiple, conflicting perspectives on historical events resulting in narratives whose conclusions remain complex and uncertain” (Simon 2011: 194). Overall, while my research took place in museums where these debates and issues take shape in material forms and performance spaces and have political consequences, I did not focus on these debates about the representation of war and violence. Instead, I approached the varied representations of the World Wars in two different museum spaces as an entry point, and lens, through which to approach memory work, negotiations of authenticity, and potentials of performance as understood and relayed to me by four individuals working or volunteering within museums.

Research Questions

In the iterative way characteristic of ethnographic and qualitative research, my work centred on two substantive research questions. My first question, in turn, led to three sub-questions, as my understanding of my topic became more elaborate. The first substantive question is:

1. How does memory work *work* in the two selected museums?

As noted in the incident of the school play, it became clear I could not reify memory-work as taking place only in the spaces of museums, or as a static phenomenon. Instead, I came to conceptualize memory as work, which thus requires an approach to memory focusing on *process* and *labour*. Memory is not a stable pre-given text, narrative, or object that is simply recalled, shared with others, or passed down to other generations. Instead memory is fluid, complex; it must be *made*. My thesis therefore aims to illustrate the labour and processes that go into the creation, re-membrance, and communication of memory at (and beyond) both Fort Edmonton Park (FEP) and the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum (LERMM).

This led in turn to three sub-questions:

- a) What do considerations of memory and history add to ways memory work works in these two museum spaces?
- b) How do memory and authenticity interact within these museums?
- c) How does performance and co-presence within museums offer different potentials and possibilities than artifacts and exhibits alone?

My second main research question deals with the complexity of how memory works in the practice of ethnography, which was the methodological approach of my research.

2. How does memory work as a form of knowledge in the practice of ethnography?

This second main question in particular required rigorous reflexivity throughout my ethnographic research. My thesis aims to show how memory, just like any other form of knowledge or experience, must be contextualized and situated (Jackson 2005; Scott 1991). This research question also responds to Fox's call for ethnographers to:

write more about memory in [our] work. Examples of this self-reflexivity include philosophical discussions that detail how ethnographers remember events; innovative typography that highlights how memory is fractured and subjective; and more applications and extensions of the mosaic metaphor to articulate the complementary and contradictory functions of memory and representation. (2010: 17)

In order to emphasize the constructed and slippery nature of memory, I therefore utilize Fox's typography for the word *re-member* (2010) throughout my thesis particularly when drawing attention to the ways in which memory is actively constructed. He hyphenates this word "to underscore the multiple, sometimes disjointed *memories* that comprise [*overall memories* and] [...] to stress the constructed-ness of [a researcher's] point of view" (Fox 2010: 4).

Having now introduced what drew me to this work and my guiding research questions, I next describe the places, and individuals who provided rich data for my observations, participation, and interviews throughout this research. I close this chapter with an outline for the rest of my thesis.

Introducing the Museums

Noting that "[anthropological] data [emerges] through *particular personal relations* and particular discourses" (Rapport 2010: 78, emphasis added), it is important to introduce the spaces – Fort Edmonton Park (FEP) and the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum (LERMM) – and people – Tom, Ryan, Maurice, and Hans – that shaped and informed my primary research sources.

My original purpose for selecting two different sites to situate my study resulted from my interest in how two different *types* of museums – a military museum and a living history museum – dealt with memory of the World Wars and their representation. In particular, these sites allowed me to interview both veterans and costumed historical interpreters, and thus extend my interest beyond artifacts and exhibits to include the compelling narratives of veterans at the LERMM and costumed historical interpreters at FEP. I use the term 'costumed historical interpreter' (often shortening it simply to 'interpreter') because it is the one I heard most often while working at FEP to characterize this type of work. It expresses that in living history museums, employees are not only actors nor only educators. Instead, costumed historical interpreters, using performance, interpret multiple historical sources from a particular historical time period to educate visitors (Magelssen 2007).

The Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum, which opened its doors in 1997, focuses on representing the history of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment. Accessibility seems to be important to the LERMM – it is open year round and is located in the same building as the City of Edmonton Archives. This building, the Prince of Wales Armoury, was originally where recruitment to the Loyal Edmonton Regiment and subsequent military training took place (Interview with Hans Brink, Dec 21, 2011).

There are a number of strong emphases on the World Wars in this museum. In one of the two rooms extending from the main atrium is an exhibit depicting the last 100 days of World War I. “Canada’s Hundred Days” outlines “the participation of the Canadian Corps in ending the First World War” (Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum Website; Museum History 2010: par. 1). The second exhibit room focuses on World War II. Though the museum does have in its collections artifacts from other conflicts (such as the Korean War and Afghanistan War), in storage rooms in its basement, currently the World Wars occupy the bulk of the public exhibits. As in any museum, of course, exhibits have been modified numerous times. The LERMM website discusses other thematic displays it has created since 2001, which included “War Brides,” “Horse Warrior,” and “Ortona.” Throughout the years the museum created “various displays at other locations, for a variety of purposes, some have just been for a day or two, in conjunction with some special occasion. Others have been longer term and a few for an indefinite length of time” (The Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum Website, Museum History 2010: pars. 8-9).

Exhibits tend to be organized according to the category of artifact, so that military uniforms in glass cases are grouped in one area of the museum, weapons in another, military medals in another, and so on. The glass cases also contain interpretive signs describing the significance of the artifacts. Finally, storyboards on the walls provide more detailed interpretive and narrative descriptions of events or aspects of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment. In the main open atrium of the museum, military uniforms from different time periods are in cases located along the wall accompanied by storyboards detailing their provenance and significance. There are also two arts installations that do not belong to the museum itself, but are related to the concepts of peace and the human costs of war and violence (Boetzkes 2010).

High above the atrium is a giant oil painting depicting the Battle of Ortona during World War II. Ortona Italy, located along the Adriatic coast, was where the “hardest fighting Canada’s 1st Infantry Division had met so far in Italy [took place]” (The Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum Website, About the Battle of Ortona Painting 2010, par. 1). As this event is integral to the history of the Regiment it is repeated in a number of exhibits throughout the museum. The Battle of Ortona was also a conflict which featured in my interviews with Maurice White.

Unlike the LERMM, Fort Edmonton Park is more accessible by car, and hence is more of a ‘destination’ site. At 160 acres, however, the site is quite impressive. FEP is a living history museum that details the history of Edmonton from approximately 1846-1929 through a combination of original and reconstructed buildings, artifacts, and interpreters. This time period is divided up into four different eras: an 1846 era, 1885 era, 1905 era, and 1920 era. All of these eras, except for the 1846 era, are organized as linear ‘streets’ with buildings located on either side. FEP is only open to the public full-time from April-August every year. The rest of the year the museum runs school programs for children that focus on short tours and hands-on activities such as crafts and baking projects. The presence of interpreters dressing in historic costumes and carrying out historic tasks – baking, gardening, blacksmithing, etc. – in order to represent and animate a particular time period characterizes a living history museum and how it is set apart from other types of museums which focus more so on artifacts and exhibits. The term *interpreter* suggests the work they engage in involves taking various historical sources and narratives, and communicating these in a way that is engaging to visitors. As Magelssen summarizes, living history museums “are sites to which tourists travel in order to engage in what is advertised as a different temporal space, to interact with a simulation of a past time as part of an educational or recreational enterprise” (2007: xxi). It is important to stress that FEP represents World War I, but not World War II, and furthermore, this narrative is not the main focus of the museum. Instead, World War I is but one part of the 1920 era narrative. Nor has World War I been part of the interpretive programming on 1920s street since the museum first opened in 1969 [Fort Edmonton Park Website, About Us 2012, par. 3]. As Tom outlined to me, World War I interpretation at FEP has been developed more extensively only in the last few years though it has existed as a narrative for many years on 1920 street. Opportunities

provided by a grant and the availability of some detailed costumes for purchase after the 2008 Canadian film *Passchendaele* wrapped led to the increased development of the World War I programming.

TL: It's only in the last couple of years that we've made [the World War I programming] a very prominent piece of the narrative [of 1920 street] by again, providing a physical touchstone for a visitor to relate it to, rather than just leaving it to an interpretive discussion. So what we did, in the last four years or so, is we've had a number of research projects, and grants, which have allowed us to create two personas, the returned veteran, and the nursing sister.

This reminds us that museums are not static, though they may appear that way to visitors who see a brief snapshot of these spaces at a particular time. Instead museums always have their own complex histories “surrounding the creation of significant [...] practices, a history of management and continuous reworking of meanings into the present” (Gegner and Ziino 2012: 2).

Living history museums are deliberately “advertised as a different temporal space” (Magelssen 2007: xx). The experiences a living history museum attempts to cultivate with visitors are ones in which they suspend a degree of belief: visitors know they are not *actually* travelling back in time upon entering a living history museum, but some will pretend as though they have when speaking with the interpreters (Magelssen 2007). The primary purpose for a living history museum is to educate. However, from my time working there, it was clear FEP also functions as a business as well as a place for recreation and fun. Tom agreed that while FEP is primarily an educational resource to provoke thought and conversations about the past, not all visitors come to the park to learn. In my summer working at the museums' entrance, I saw numerous visitors who just came to ride the historic steam train, visit the ponies, play midway games, or ride the Ferris Wheel or carousel at the 1920s Midway without any intention to do or see much else.

In fact, there are a number of proscribed activities and ‘paths through’ the Park. Visitors are encouraged to take the 1919 Baldwin Steam Train from the admissions building and gift shop at the front of the park back to the reconstruction of the 1846 Fort Edmonton depicting Edmonton's fur trade history. “Fort Edmonton was the most

important Hudson's Bay Company west of the Red River Settlement at Fort Garry" (Fort Edmonton Park Website; Attractions 2012: par. 3). Located outside of the Fort is a Cree encampment, normally staffed by First Nations interpreters. After visiting the Fort visitors are encouraged to walk through the three remaining 'eras' depicting Edmonton's history: 1885 Street, 1905 Street, and 1920 Street. The overall depiction of time and history is therefore a linear one in which the events from the past are portrayed as leading to the inevitable development of particular conditions in the present (Magelssen 2007). The streets are lined with buildings of various types, such as houses, businesses, or churches, that are a mixture of reconstructions and original buildings from Edmonton's history. Artifacts are placed in buildings in a manner to reflect how they would have been positioned or used in the past. These artifacts are not accompanied by any signs, though many buildings will have sections roped off to discourage visitors from touching the furniture and other artifacts. Interpretive signs are located outside of the buildings but the bulk of the interpretive work is carried out by costumed historical interpreters. Such subtle (and not so subtle) instruction about how visitors 'should' experience the site suggests other aspects as to how museums powerfully shape impressions and ideas. It is because I am interested in exploring aspects of how museums work with these forces in various ways that I selected these two very different museums.

In the Flesh: Veterans and Costumed Historical Interpreters

As this project focuses centrally on the many ways in which memory *works* in the two museums, not only the spaces and artifacts of the museums must be considered but also, even more crucially, the people who animate them. At both the LERMM and FEP, long-time volunteers and employees agreed to interviews with me over a period of several months. At the LERMM, these included Maurice White and Hans Brink but there are also, throughout the museum a number of veterans who volunteer weekly to run the office, answer research requests, assist with cataloguing artifacts, and run programs or presentations. The LERMM is primarily run by volunteers, who are veterans of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, or who had family members that served in the Regiment. My research therefore paid close attention to those who work or volunteer in museum spaces, and their narratives, memories, and experiences. This illustrates the importance of analysing the complex daily processes taking place within museums, rather than just

artifacts or exhibits (though see Magelssen 2007 and Peers 2007). Additionally, in interviewing Maurice and Hans specifically, my research helps to generate an understanding of how veterans re-member not just through memoirs, legion activities (Thien 2009), documentary films, or oral history projects, but also actively re-member within museum spaces.

Maurice White is a veteran of World War II who volunteered for service with the Loyal Edmonton Regiment when he was a teenager. Now, he volunteers at the LERMM about once a week, and has done so since the 1990s. He explained he started volunteering at the LERMM because he wanted to “keep the memories floating and [get] involved with the school children [to share his experiences with them]” (Interview with Maurice White Dec 7, 2011). Our first interview took place in December 2011, in the main office of the LERMM; I interviewed him again in March 2012. Maurice is in his 90’s and has an easy smile. From our interactions I most recall his modesty and kindness. These qualities were also noted by fellow volunteers and colleagues at the museum. Maurice is involved in varied tasks at the museum, such as assisting with cataloguing artifacts, but the main work he does through the museum involves outreach programs to schools around Remembrance Day. In these visits he shares his wartime memories and answers any questions children may have.

Hans Brink was the second volunteer veteran whom I interviewed in December 2011 (and again, in April, 2012). Both of these interviews took place at the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum. Hans, who earned a BA with a focus on military history, had a 40 year military career serving in the Loyal Edmonton Regiment. He described how he came to volunteer at the museum in 2008 as follows:

HB: I was a serving member of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, and had dealings with the staff here as early as 2000.

LH: And why did you decide to become involved here at the Regimental Museum in both an unofficial and official capacity?

HB: Because I truly believe in the goals and missions of this museum to preserve the history of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment and the military of northern Alberta. I’m a history buff, my BA was history and studied mainly military history, I joined the army because [pause] I wanted to be in the military so this is the way to continue [pause] that interest.

Hans indicated he assists with variable projects at the museum, including helping to build the display cases using his carpentry skills. He runs the interactive summer camp at the museum entitled 'A Soldier Through Time' which invites children to pretend they are new recruits joining at World War I who then progress through time over the five days, culminating in an emphasis on the present day military. Hans has also written research articles for the Loyal Edmonton Regiment's publication *The Forty-Niner* (The Loyal Edmonton Regiment Association 2011).

Maurice and Hans both participate in other military related volunteer activities outside of the museum. When I asked Maurice and Hans about their participation in the Legion, they both indicated they do not have much time to partake in Legion activities because they are very involved volunteering at other military related organizations. Previous studies have emphasized how veterans often re-member and share their memories through Legion activities, public ceremonies and rituals, oral history projects, or memoirs (Roberman 2007; Thien 2009; Todman 2009; Winter 1995, 2006, 2010). Less often has there been any attention to how veterans actively work to remember within museums.²

A noticeable part of this is in appearance. Although military uniforms are very much in evidence within all the LERMM activities, at Fort Edmonton Park costumed historical interpreters are a key component of the educational and interactive programming. Indeed, the majority of employees at FEP are University students, many of whom are majoring in history, drama, or education, since interpretive work touches on aspects of all of these disciplines. The two employees I interviewed from this museum (Ryan Mullen and Tom Long) both have experience supervising the interpretive work that takes place on 1920 street and so could provide good insights about how World War I is remembered and portrayed at Fort Edmonton Park. Both have worked at the museum for many years. Each also has experience as a costumed historical interpreter, and as such each was able to share memories of performing and interacting with visitors at Fort Edmonton Park. Therefore, in our interviews, while I asked them specific

² Though Roberman (2007), in documenting how World War II Jewish Soviet veterans, now living in Israel, attempted to make their experiences included in the national-wide Israeli commemorative practices, does discuss how veterans set up a museum to communicate their efforts in World War II.

questions about the representation of World War I on 1920 street, I was also able to learn more in general about their experiences of and approach to living history interpretation. One of the interesting influences of their work as costumed historical interpreters on our interviews was that Tom and Ryan both had a distinct 'interpretive' voice. These clear, measured, experienced public speaking voices I heard during my interviews with them were similar in tone to the voices my former co-workers would use while interpreting, which could be quite different in quality and tone than their 'off-work' conversational voices. I can also recall modifying my own voice in similar ways when working at FEP as a costumed historical interpreter. Overall, the process of interpretation requires daily public speaking, often for large groups of visitors.

Given this, it is understandable that Ryan, now in his late 20s, obtained his University degree in drama and education. He explained to me his interest in, and approach to, living history museum interpretation in a way which clearly communicated his theatrical background.

RM: [When interpreting] I'd like to play the character, I like to *be* the character, that was the way I liked to interact with people was to *be* the person rather than just a representation of them, willing to break character, sometimes I'd like to stay in that character and give [visitors] a sense, at least based on my interpretation, of what [my character's] life was [...].

Our first interview in November 2011 took place in one of the administrative rooms at the museum. Our second interview took place in January 2012, at the University of Alberta where we both went for our undergraduate degrees. Ryan had been a costumed historical interpreter for many years in the re-creation of the 1846 Fort Edmonton, and has worked with the World War I programming in his later position as a supervisor. Additionally, he has developed a few podcasts³ out of the World War I programs, in an effort to reach a broader audience than just those who visit the park.

³ At the time of researching and writing, these podcasts, created in 2004, were no longer available on the Fort Edmonton Park website, where they had been originally posted. In our first interview Ryan was unsure as to what had happened with these podcasts.

Tom was my supervisor when I worked at FEP and I had one interview with him, in December 2011. He is in his early thirties, and studied history at the University of Alberta. He has worked at the museum for about nine years, spending many of those years as a costumed historical interpreter and many in a supervisory capacity. Tom was a driving force behind the development of the World War I programming on 1920 street. He described his interest in living history museum interpretation as follows:

LH: So why did you decide to become involved with historical interpretation?

TL: It actually happened when - in my university career, where I'd chosen history as my major but wasn't actually sure what I wanted to do with it, and in my final year of study I attended the Cortona program in Italy, which is a [University of Alberta] satellite campus, and just the experience of studying in Italy for awhile and being able to go and give presentations for my classes, *in* authentic ruins of Roman buildings, made me realize that I *really* love talking about history when there's a physical representation there, when it's not all esoteric and so I became convinced that working in [...] a living history, or a museum environment was what I wanted to do.

Outline of Thesis

This chapter has introduced the topic of my master's project, detailed my guiding questions, and briefly sketched the primary places and people with whom I conducted my research. The balance of the thesis will complete the account of my project. In Chapter 2, I explore with some depth my commitment to an ethnographic approach and its consequent effects. After outlining in Chapter 3 the five key theoretical lenses with which I approached my research and fieldwork materials, in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 I consider, in turn, complexities of memory work (especially in relation to history, to forgetting, to ethnographic fieldwork, to authenticity, and to performance). Chapter 7 summarizes the project, and articulates both the significance and contribution of my work, and also outlines some inevitable limitations. Finally, in the Appendices, I include my consent form (Appendix A) and interview questions (Appendix B).

Chapter 2.

An Ethnographic Methodology: Approaches to Ethnography

In this chapter I examine the substantive consequences that ensued from my choice of an ethnographic methodology for examining memory work in museums. These sections focus on both the methodological choices and principles that I established going into my project as well as how they ‘worked’ in practice. I feel it important to make these choices and consequences transparent as knowledge “is a social phenomenon rather than simply a substance. To maintain scholarly authority one must be able to account for the particular mode of interest that gives direction and shape to knowledge” (Hastrup 2004: 456). How I carried out my research, and the processes by which I generated ‘knowledge’, are just as important to consider and explore as the data created through the processes of interviewing, observing, transcribing, reading, and writing. In that the following chapters all involve an interweaving of voices, texts, and experiences, I feel it is important first to lay out these foundational principles of how I undertook, and understood, my actions and assumptions in this research.

The focus of my research was on the experiences and memories of my interviewees. Therefore in my writing my thesis I experienced a tension in trying to maintain the voices and stories of my interviewees while also analysing the implications and possibilities of their narratives. While some scholars critique the fact that analysis of oral narratives can dampen the voices of our interlocutors, Madison points out that “analysis serves as a magnifying lens, or better, a house of mirrors to enlarge, amplify, and refigure the small details and the taken for granted [...] analysis helps us pay closer attention” (2012: 36). An interview consists of dialogue – how someone discusses a particular topic or answers a question during an interview is considerably shaped by the phrasing of the questions asked. In re-presenting interview material in this thesis I often

include my own voice in order to reflect the dialogical and conversational practice of interviewing.

Critical Reflexivity

Including my own voice from my interviews was also an act of critical reflexivity that involved making explicit many of my interview questions, and examining some of the complexities I encountered as a researcher in the memory work involved in my ethnographic fieldwork. Reflexive ethnographers and their writings are often critiqued for being self-indulgent or narcissistic. Such critiques are based on theoretical assumptions that the individual or private aspects of a researcher's life do not have any bearing on her research, or that such an impact is a distracting one which takes away from the goal of representing the "other", or research participants. I argue, rather, with Church, that "because [our] subjective experience[s] [are] part of the world, the story which emerges [from our research] is not completely private and idiosyncratic" (Church 1995: 5 quoted in Sparkes 2002: 216). That is, 'collectives' cannot remember (so that collective memories are always experienced, rehearsed, and recalled by *individuals*), and individuals are inherently social beings. The productivity and importance of reflexivity and attention to researchers' autobiographies when it comes to social analysis is premised on two assumptions: we can learn about the general from the particular, and an individual is *always* involved in and constituted by social phenomenon.

Jackson (2005) calls for the necessity of a rigorous reflexivity. By this he means it is not enough to just 'admit' to readers or interlocutors our gender, ethnicity, class, age, etc. These aspects of our personality alone do not 'explain' or offer immediate answers as to how we interact with individuals, how they will respond to our presence, how we analyze our data, and how we write about our research. Instead, ethnographers must consider how a researcher's complex identity impacts the production of knowledge, and more generally "the kinds of knowledge-producing interactions possible out there in the world [...]. [Ethnographers must question] the necessary trust and blind faith that define those interactions in the first place" (Jackson 2005: 159). Furthermore, reflexivity is required at all stages of the research process, not just during fieldwork itself. Madison describes reflexivity as a dialogical performativity whereby "the ethnographer not only contemplates his or her actions and meanings in the field (reflexive) but also she or he

turned inward to contemplate *how* she or he is contemplating actions and meaning” (Madison 2011: 129).

Positionality is related to, but also theoretically distinct from the concept of critical reflexivity. While reflexivity explores the impact that the researcher (as an individual situated within particular social, political, and academic contexts) has on the process and outcomes of fieldwork, positionality pays attention to the interactions that take place between subjects – the researcher and their interlocutors. Madison stresses that positionality requires us to move “our attention beyond our individual or *subjective* selves. Instead, we attend to how our subjectivity *in relation to others* informs and is informed by our engagement [with] and representation of others” (2012: 10). Positionality – how we relate to and engage with others – “forces us to acknowledge our own power, privilege, and biases” (Madison 2012: 7). This makes us critically assess and address how we as researchers in many situations are located within positions of authority. However, such authority is never guaranteed and can shift in different contexts and with different interlocutors. Identity is never fixed and this applies to a researcher’s identity as much as it does to his or her research participants.

I have been guided throughout research design, enactment, analysis, and writing by Jackson’s and Madison’s formulations of “rigorous”, “critical”, and “dialogically performative” reflexivity. I will elaborate below on how I endeavoured to put critical reflexivity into practice during processes of research design and enactment. In subsequent chapters on analysis and representations, I draw directly upon earlier versions of my thesis, in order to critique and assess my earlier interpretations and assumptions, and to demonstrate how I tacked back and forth between theory and practice throughout.

In my research, issues of critical reflexivity and positionality surfaced in subtle ways. In contemporary anthropology it is widely acknowledged that the identities of research participants are never fixed. During my fieldwork, I came to see how aspects of my own identity also shifted as a researcher in the process of ethnographic fieldwork when interacting with different people. As such I include here reflexive analysis of my shifts in positionality, challenging Kohn’s critique that the majority of reflexive texts portray an anthropologist’s “notion of ‘self’ identity [as] fairly static in nature” (2010: 190).

Though all of my interview participants were of the same ethnicity (Caucasian)⁴ and gender (male), and roughly middle-class, in reviewing my fieldnotes and transcriptions, I realized I engaged with them all in different ways.

First though, I briefly critique the assumptions which form the basis of my claim that my participants were all 'roughly middle-class'. Class is not solely an economic position (see Bourdieu's work as described in Barnard 2007; Goldstein 2003; Jackson 2005),⁵ but is instead expressed through certain behaviours, performances, how one moves through spaces, enters into space (or is not allowed into them), or how one has the potential to modify or utilize public or private spaces (Moretti 2008). Class never came up explicitly and verbally in my interviews with Tom, Ryan, Maurice, or Hans, but rather I came to infer they were 'middle-class' from particular social cues. First, the majority of my co-workers at FEP, Tom and Ryan included, are university educated. I could infer class position from many of my former co-workers by their clothing, or even expensive haircuts. As well, FEP in general is in some senses a middle or higher class space, because it can be an expensive outing (while it is an educational space, it is still a *business*), and it is easier to get there if one owns a car, though it is technically accessible by public transit. Another 'cue' about class that I used to form my assumptions, was that Tom and Ryan are both full-time employees of the museum, in supervisory positions, though I do not know their salaries. For Hans, I assumed he was middle-class because he was university educated and had a 40 year military career, and now has time to volunteer with various projects. While Maurice mentioned to me in passing during our second interview that he did not go to school past the 6th grade, and I am not sure what career he had following the war, I took a cue from his car in the museum's parking lot (I knew it was his from the First Special Service Forces sticker,

⁴ Though this issue is too broad to cover in the scope of my thesis, I recognize ethnicity is never experienced uniformly. Rather, "whiteness changes over time and space and is no way a transhistorical essence [...]. And if whiteness varies spatially and temporally it is also a relational category, one that is co-constructed within a range of other racial and cultural categories" (Frankenberg 1993: 236).

⁵ I recognize however that class is further complicated in the literature in that it does not exist in simple, easily identifiable typologies, though this issue is again outside the scope of my research. My use of the term 'middle-class' is therefore problematic, since our current typologies of class "have greatly reduced our ability to apprehend the fluidity of class relations and experience" (Carbonella and Kasmir 2006: 8).

amongst other military stickers on it), which looked fairly new and well maintained, that he was well off. Overall, reflecting upon my assumption that all of my participants are middle-class, was interesting to me for what it illustrated about how ethnographers or research participants (perhaps incorrectly) 'read' class from cues such as behaviours, material objects, performances, use of space, etc. My perceptions of and assumptions about class are also a product of my generation in that "younger people do not identify themselves through explicit class categories...[so that] it seems class currently has 'no language'; it is 'hidden' and 'displaced'" (Robertson 2004: 195).

Differences in my research interactions with my participants were related in part to the variable experiences of my participants (Ryan and Tom as costumed historical interpreters and Maurice and Hans as soldiers), though of course every individual is different and unique in his own way (Caverero 2005)⁶ When interviewing Tom and Ryan, I was more at ease and was quite comfortable speaking with both of them. This likely stemmed from my *shared* experience with Ryan and Tom. Though I did not work directly with Ryan during my time at FEP, we still shared to some degree the experience of costumed historical interpretation, which included knowing some of the same people. My interviews with Ryan in particular therefore ended up being more conversational, likely due to my ease at having known him prior to my research. This contrasted to my interviews with Maurice and Hans, which were more rigid and stayed on the topic of their military and volunteer experiences or the work of the LERMM. An interesting aspect of my interview with Tom is that in reflecting upon the transcription, I saw that Tom enacted the role of a costumed historical interpreter. This probably happened because our interview took place on 1920s street which is what the space will be used for when the museum is open in the summer. Therefore, our interview flowed more like an instance of the costumed historical interpretation that takes place at the museum, rather than an interview, where Tom filled the role of costumed historical interpreter (despite not being in costume), whereas I was situated as the listening visitor.

⁶ For Caverero the uniqueness of the voice in turn implies the uniqueness of the body and the individual: "the voice [...] is always different from all other voices, even if the words are the same [...]. A voice means this: that there is a living person, throat, chest, feelings, who sends into the air this voice, different from all other voices" (2005: 3-4).

My behaviour towards Maurice and Hans was heavily conditioned by the respect I felt was owed to them as veterans and as part of an older generation. I was less comfortable in my interviews at the LERMM, in part because I have no knowledge of the military. While Hans used a number of military abbreviations in our first interview, once I asked him to clarify one of the abbreviations during our second interview, he spelt out military terminology from that point forward. Furthermore, during my interviews with Hans, I noted my questions and mannerisms were more precise than in any of my other interviews. This was shaped by my observation of his own precision in our communications and interactions during our interviews, which I assumed resulted from his forty years of military experience. This style of social interaction, characterized by precision and conciseness, is not one I am personally used to, but I came to mimic this style throughout my two interviews with Hans. With Maurice, especially during our first interview, I did my best to intentionally steer him away from any narratives that seemed too emotional so as to lead him away from the powerful feelings that could emerge from re-membering his wartime experiences. The reason for my avoidance was two-fold. First, as a first-time researcher, I was tentative in my ability to handle an emotionally charged interview. Second, I was worried having Maurice re-call memories which triggered emotions such as fear or sadness would bring an aspect of 'risk' (emotional harm), as defined by institutional ethics, to our interview. The Tri-Council Statement on Ethics conceptualizes a temporary emotional reaction to a research question as a transient harm (Tri-Council Policy Statement 2010: 22). However, when asking our participants to re-call personal memories, which we frequently ask our interviewees to do, we cannot expect that these re-collections will be devoid of emotion. This statement therefore dichotomizes the mind and body by assuming that in answering research questions it is possible for our interviewees will remain 'emotionless' and that these answers only engage participants 'from the neck up'. Nor does the policy clearly outline what *type* of emotional reactions would be considered a transient harm. Are researchers (unrealistically) expected to avoid all 'negative' feelings - fear, irritation, anxiety, sadness, anger, grief?

While university ethics boards typically define minimal risk as situations in which "the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in research [is] no greater than those encountered in those aspects of [the participant's] everyday life

that relate to the research” (Tri-Council Policy Statement 2010: 23), it was difficult for me to assess the level of ‘risk’ Maurice encounters in his everyday life. As our interviews progressed, I came to see that talking about his military experiences, even if that leads him to become emotional, *is* part of his everyday life. For example, when travelling around to schools throughout Alberta leading up to Remembrance Day, he mentioned that he will often ‘shed a few tears’ when re-calling memories for the students. However, this was difficult for me to assess in our first interview, which is why I did not initially expand further on the wartime stories Maurice told me.

The fact that I had worked at FEP before carrying out my research impacted how I re-encountered the space in interesting ways. This previous experience provided me with unique insight or opportunities that I may not have had otherwise. It also provided another ‘layer’ of memory, for while I developed memories of the space as experienced through the lens of ethnographic fieldwork, I was also re-remembering many things about working at the museum. During my interviews I came to realize that I was not paying attention to the space of FEP in the same way that I did at the LERMM. While I paid close attention to the layout of the exhibits and artifacts at the LERMM, at FEP, I never stopped to write lengthy descriptions about its layout or design features, because I was already familiar with them prior to beginning my research. As a result of my previous encounters with the museum, I suspect many of the interview questions I asked Tom and Ryan were of a different nature than they would have been for a researcher who gained access to the space solely for the purposes of research. For example, when reviewing my transcriptions from my interviews with Tom and Ryan I never asked them questions about what characterized living history museums or how they *worked*. I assumed I already understood the basics of the museum from working there. My time working at FEP shaped not only my observations of the space during my interviews, but also my analysis and writing. I went into my research with *particular* understandings and assumptions of the ways in which FEP, as a living history museum, and the practice of living history interpretation worked. Throughout the iterative stages of analysis, these understandings and assumptions gradually shifted, as I tacked back and forth between my original understandings and assumptions, different theoretical lenses, and analysis and re-analysis of my interview materials. This process led me to increasingly pay attention how my participants’ views challenged my original understanding of the work

that takes place at FEP and museums in general. While writing my thesis, I was also particularly concerned with issues of representing my interviews with Tom and Ryan, and the work that takes place at FEP, as I anticipated that my thesis might be shared with former co-workers. As has become common practice in ethnographic research, I gave Tom and Ryan transcriptions of our interviews to review, and then sections of my thesis draft that included my analyses and interpretations of their interviews. The feedback that resulted from this process enriched my analysis.

However, familiarity with this museum also offered me important possibilities and opportunities that I might not have had otherwise. My prior employment at the site allowed me to see many aspects of the interpretive *process* rather than just the final performances for visitors. As Magelssen notes, it is the case that “living museums hide their own selection processes. Living history museums are not seen as living “making-history” museums, and thus their decisions, agenda, and biases are rendered invisible” (2007: 45).

Generating Research

My research practices simultaneously elicited, evoked and *created* narratives and memories – that is, they were premised on the understanding that research is ‘generated’ rather than driven by an effort to discover full-formed static objects waiting to be collected.

I decided to conduct a number of semi-structured interviews rather than engage in observant participation within the museums. While participant observation might have enabled me to observe and participate in interactions among volunteers and interpreters with visitors to these museums (such as those that take place when FEP is open to the general public, or when Maurice visits schools around Remembrance Day), my focus was intentionally different. I wanted to explore opportunities to generate and analyse “personal stories of motivation and meaning-making” (Burk 2003: 59) of those involved in memory work within museums as well as the ways in which my participants narrate and reflect upon the work that they engage in. Focusing on those who work or volunteer within museums and how they narrate these experiences proved particularly valuable, and contributed to the growing body of research addressing the fact that attending to the

perspectives and daily negotiations of those who work in museums can illustrate the dynamic and complex decisions and work that take place within these spaces from ‘the ground up’ (Magelssen 2007; Peers 2007).

In addition, interviews allowed me to explore my research questions and generate various perspectives on the work that takes place within museums. For example, as others have noted, despite the careful design of performances, artifacts, and exhibits within museums, these acts and objects all have the potential to “seemingly disappear or be forgotten [or ignored] when they are encountered and experienced as elements of a lived-in, everyday local landscape” (Opp and Walsh 2010). I wanted to explore perspectives of those such as Tom and Ryan who both had countless memories of visitors actively engaging in the performances at FEP.

In the first few months of my research I carried out four semi-structured interviews. Three of my four interviewees agreed to conduct a second follow-up interview. A few weeks before each of my second interviews with Ryan, Maurice, and Hans, I provided them with the transcription of our first interview so that they had the opportunity to ask me any questions about the transcription process or my research. These second interviews were useful for a few reasons. First, when interviewing Maurice and Hans for the first time, it was also the first time I met them. Therefore, by the second interview they potentially had a better sense of me and of my goals and theirs in conducting and participating in this research, and vice-versa. Next, the second interview allowed me to clarify a number of questions that came up while transcribing the first interviews and allowed me to discuss certain narratives in more depth. Therefore, the semi-structured second interview questions were constructed to be specific for each interviewee, whereas in my first interviews my semi-structured questions were similar (see Appendix B). This challenges the assumption when designing an ethnographic research project that one interview with each interviewee is all that is necessary, especially if the first interview is the first time in which the researcher and the interviewee meet each other.

I conducted all but one of my interviews at either FEP – when interviewing Tom and Ryan – or the LERMM – when interviewing Maurice and Hans. My follow-up interview with Ryan took place at the University of Alberta because at the time of the

second interview he was not working at FEP for a few months. The premise behind locating my interviews in the museums was that space is an important trigger for memory (see Burk 2003, 2010; Connerton 1989, 2011; Hayden 1995; Kusenbach 2003) so that “places can be seen as mnemonic devices” (Filippucci 2010: 37). People are often led to re-call memories with more facility when in the places where the remembered experience developed. Since my initial interview questions asked my interviewees to remember the work they have done at the museums conducting these interviews *in situ* helped my interviewees generate memories. This choice further addresses the fact that the work of interpreters at FEP and of volunteers at the LERMM is carried out amongst, and with reference to, broader museum exhibits and artifacts. Therefore for my interviews with Tom, Hans, and Maurice, I incorporated the museums into our interviews. This prompted narratives and memories that I don’t think would have emerged if I had not asked each of them to walk me through the museums. For example, upon seeing two stuffed animals – one of a dog and one of Winnie the Pooh - on a chair (that were technically not an official ‘exhibit’), Maurice told me an impromptu story about an aspect of the Regiment’s history.

MW: [This stuffed animal is Winnie the Pooh, and the stuffed animal of a dog is meant to be Lestock]. In the First World War when [the] Regiment from Winnipeg was going overseas, they had adopted a bear cub, in Winnipeg, so it ended up with the name Winnie the Pooh [...] but strangely enough and this is Lestock [points to the stuffed animal], that’s when our Regiment went through Lestock Saskatchewan [before the] First World War, they stopped for whatever reason and there was a coyote pup, that the mother had left or got killed [...] so they adopted it and they took it, on the train, and it went overseas on the ship [and Winnie the Pooh and Lestock] ended up in cages side by side in [a zoo] in London.

Ethnographic Ethics

My research was carried out in accordance to Simon Fraser University’s ethical policies and requirements and ethical treatment of all participants was the primary objective of any fieldwork interaction. However, while institutional ethics emphasize the importance of consent forms, ethics had to be considered at all stages of the research process, including the writing stage, thus extending well beyond the original signing of

consent forms. When engaging in any form of social research, it is crucial that our primary responsibilities are to those studied so that we do “not *harm the safety, dignity, or privacy* of those with whom [we] work” (Madison 2012: 129). Often, it is assumed that this will be achieved by camouflaging identity of research participants through use of pseudonyms, for example. However, in my project, Maurice, Hans, Ryan, and Tom all chose to have their real names and identities used in my research project. I suggest this was influenced by the nature of their work. While my interviewees at times utilize *personal* memories - Maurice and Hans in particular – their work is consciously *public*. Therefore, as a researcher, I was simply another type of public with which to discuss their memory work. However, the decision to use their own names might have also been impacted by how they understood my research. For example, when discussing my informed consent forms with Ryan before starting our first interview, I was struck by some ideas he appeared to have as to the nature of our interview.

To try to make it less awkward [...when Ryan was filling out the consent form] I did what I normally do – joke about the length and confusion of the consent form. [...] [Ryan] made some mention of the fact that if it was an interview with an ‘informant’ about some sort of scandalous topic it would be more understandable to be concerned about risks/benefits, etc.

(Fieldnotes November 25, 2011)

This suggests Ryan thought he could use his name because he was not speaking about or ‘confessing’ anything controversial. Though all of my participants agreed to the use of their real names in my project, upon reflection, I realize that despite having anonymity as an *option* in my consent form, this would have been impossible to guarantee. This is because both ‘sets’ of participants – Tom and Ryan from FEP and Maurice and Hans from the LERMM – were from a small group and I carried out my interviews *in situ*. Therefore, my participants knew (either from talking with each other, or from seeing me interviewing someone else) who was participating in my project. Van den Hoonaard notes that since “ethnographers still have a tendency to select research participants located in the same community who are known to each other” (2003: 143) the unique experiences they share with researchers are extremely identifiable.

Individuals from both FEP and the LERMM expressed interest in my research for their own purposes and ends, though what exactly these were remained unclear to me.

A few months after I had finished interviewing and transcribing my interviews with Maurice and Hans, the volunteer coordinator who had been helpful scheduling interviews, as a generous gesture, gave me copies of two LERMM DVDs, to thank me for spending time at the museum (and presumably to thank me for *featuring* the museum in my research). An employee from FEP asked for a copy of my final thesis for his own research library so that he could enhance his perspective on their practices. Both of these instances suggest that those I encountered in my research viewed my work as beneficial in some way to their own institutional work and goals.

Just like researchers, our participants always enter into an interview or research project with their own expectations, assumptions, or goals (Castañeda 2006). Ryan for example asked for my interview questions in advance before our first interview, which I provided him, though I stressed my aim was to keep the interview as open-ended as possible. This suggests he viewed an interview as a setting in which the interviewee is required to provide ‘accurate’ and precise information. Maurice had previously participated in another Master’s Thesis project focusing on his military experiences in Ortona, Italy. He had also participated in two oral history projects (one through the LERMM and one through a nationally funded initiative called ‘The Memory Project’ (The Memory Project 2008)), and a number of documentary films detailing aspects of his military service. Therefore, I feel that when he found out I was a Masters student writing my thesis who wanted to interview him, he engaged with me because he expected the interviews to be about what all of those other projects had allowed him to do – sharing his wartime experiences (thus enabling him to “keep the memories floating”). This expectation was reflected in how Maurice kept bringing up his military experiences during our first interview despite the fact that my original intention was to learn more about his volunteer work at the museum. It is also interesting that at least in our first interview, Maurice and I had two different, and in some ways, opposing goals. He expected to share his military experiences, and I wanted to (at least initially) learn about his work at the LERMM.

More than any other part of my research, the ethical component is what kept me up at night. Werry and O’Gorman emphasize that the researcher’s body can generate feelings of anxiety or tension which alert a researcher to those encounters or aspects of research that do not ‘feel right’. “Attending to affect in general [...] can attune us

reflexively to the embodied and relational dynamics of [the] learning process that more discursive modes of analysis are unable to access” (Werry and O’Gorman 2007: 213). It is exactly these things that feel out of place that are most important to address and critically analyze. With a focus on quotidian ethical practices (Cerwonka and Malkki 2007) in my ethnography, I was constantly interrogating whether my interactions with and representations of my research participants were fair. The fact that my participants, and potentially others at FEP and the LERMM made up part of my audience also contributed to my concerns about the ethics of representation throughout the writing process.

One way to ensure I attended to ethics daily was to make consent an on-going process that extended beyond the initial signing of consent forms (see Appendix A). I communicated with my participants at various stages. First, in reviewing the informed consent forms after my initial interviews, I realized that two of my four interviewees had not filled them out correctly. I provided all of my interviewees with a copy of their consent forms and with the three who met with me for a second interview, I gave them the opportunity to review the consent form with me a second time. This helped correct the original mistakes, but was also important since it recognizes that participants can find it difficult to consent to an interview without knowing the researcher or how the interview will actually play out. Second, I gave each interviewee a copy of the transcription(s) of my interview(s) as gifts. At this stage they were invited to provide me with any feedback or comments. However, since the way in which sections of my interviews were utilized or represented in this thesis is not evident in a transcribed interview, all of my interviewees expressed interest in reading sections of my thesis drafts that discussed and interpreted my interviews with them. This proved quite useful, since two of my interviewees responded back with minor, but important corrections. This third process also extended consent beyond the initial signing of consent forms and illustrates the importance of emphasizing ethical considerations well into the writing phases of research. “Writing is not an innocent practice. We know the world only through our representations of it [...]. Words and language have a material presence in the world; [we cannot forget] that words have effects on people. Words matter” (Denzin 2001: 23-24). Writing is therefore significantly bound up with ethical considerations.

Throughout my research I had to remain critically aware of how I represented my participants. The act of writing ethnography, including this thesis, can potentially fix and thus contribute to objectifying my participants and their narratives (Davidson 2008). This was reflected by the fact that in my consent forms I had to communicate to my interviewees that I would be unable to change anything in my final thesis, since once it was lodged in the SFU library it would become a public document. Furthermore, “texts have social lives, and it is impossible to foresee the political or other uses to which one’s ethnography may be put” (Cerwonka and Malkki 2007: 131). My uneasiness with writing about my participants and their experiences remained throughout the entire writing process. When I wrote my first few drafts, I noticed I did not use the full names of my interviewees but instead only used their initials. This was *despite* the fact that they all agreed to have their real names identified in my project. My inability to write out their names might stem from my hesitation and anxiety about ‘fixing’ their identities and narratives concretely to the page. However, university ethics procedures can also generate a sense of moral panic or paranoia, particularly for qualitative researchers who must work within an ethics approval framework still too similar to the biomedical model of ethics (Van den Hoonaard 2001). I experienced such paranoia in even being unsure as to whether I could allow Maurice to talk about his wartime experiences if it made him emotional to do so. This reflects that I was strongly influenced by the rhetoric of the university ethics review framework, which conceptualizes interviews in terms of risks and benefits, when it makes little sense to approach interviews with this mindset.

These concerns, observations and practices remained throughout my research project. As such, they have influenced how I have decided to write up the next several chapters, which deal, in turn, with several aspects of the complexities of memory work in museums, both in the scholarly literature, and in terms of the actual events, experiences, and exchanges encountered in my research.

Chapter 3.

Five Ways to Think about Memory

The irony of *doing* ethnographic research and writing about it is that the first is necessarily messy, recursive, permeable and synchronistic, while the latter must reflect some sort of coherence and linear 'logic'. Thus, though there really is *not* a clear division between 'theory' and 'practice' in ethnography, the constraints of academic writing unfortunately force an appearance of one. My intentions in this chapter, therefore, are to highlight some key theorists on memory whose work seemed particularly useful in the unfolding of my project, and then, here (and continuing in the next three chapters), to move towards illustrating these ideas as they entered my observations, interviews, and reflections during my fieldwork.

Memory in Museums: Five Key Lenses

As noted in the introduction, the invitation from Fox to "write more about memory in our work" (2010:17) as ethnographers compelled me in this project to consistently be attentive to the slippery and constructed nature of *re*-membering. Not only did I have to reflect on my own processes and assumptions about both the content and nature of my own memory-crafting, but I also looked closely at those theorists who have problematized the so-called 'memory-boom' in the social sciences (Berliner 2005; Cattell and Climo 2002; Fentress and Wickham 1992; Huyssen 2003; Radstone and Schwarz 2010). In areas such as commemorations of World Wars, of course, such *re*-membering is overtly about social constructions valorizing particular versions of past events – the *social* consequences of memory are imbricated with more individual memories (Burk 2010).

My research centred on the *individual* memories and narratives of individuals who volunteer or work at two different museums. It is still fundamentally the *individual*,

as a member of a group, who is capable of remembering (Coser 1992: 22; Green 2004). However, individual memory is never isolated from sociality (Fabian 2007, Madison 2012). My interviews, during which Ryan, Tom, Maurice, and Hans shared their memories with me, were inherently social encounters: “Individual memory is not a straightforward psychological phenomenon but a socially shared experience. Other memories are present in and constituted by family, friends, and a host of public representations” (Madison 2012: 38). Furthermore, “as a social practice, memory is a communicative practice, [and thus] all narrated memory is in that sense collective” (Fabian 2007: 93). Therefore, though my research is about the individuals’ memories and narratives of carrying out memory work, the very purpose of their memory work is a collective and public one.

This brings me to the second main theoretical lens most useful to my own research: Fabian’s analysis of the act of re-remembering as a form of *work* (2007). Fabian asserts that memory is never a given. Instead it must always be made and re-made - recall how Maurice’s primary reason for volunteering at the LERMM was to *actively maintain* his own memories while also sharing them. A frequent and problematic approach in the conceptualization of collective memory is that it is often represented as a stable ‘form’, ‘narrative’, ‘text’, or ‘object’ that can be transmitted intact within and between generations. However, memories are always re-created and re-enacted, since they are not objects “of knowledge [that are] inert, lying somewhere out there in the landscape waiting to be ‘discovered’ or ‘felt’” (Cerwonka and Malkki 2007: 173). Further, in order for memories to be sustained at either an individual or social level, they even may need to be rehearsed (Todman 2009). Any “action is deeply enculturated and culture exists only in practice” (Hastrup 1995: 77).

Fabian’s theoretical analysis of memory as a form of *work* highlights particular processes and activities (*work*) such as telling narratives, building memorials, enacting ceremonies, performing within museums, etc., that create and shape memories. This complex re-imagining of memory work thus productively complicates the common assumption that the processes of re-remembering and forgetting form a simple binary division in which there is the tendency “to ascribe to memory and remembering a predominately positive value” (Fabian 2007: 77), and cast forgetting in a negative light. Fabian critiques the assumption that memory = remembering and that forgetting = not

remembering. Instead, he re-conceptualizes memory as work requiring both remembering and forgetting (Fabian 2007: 78).

Other scholars have similarly emphasized a continuum between forgetting and re-remembering (Burk 2010; Connerton 2008). People can forget for different reasons. Sometimes forgetting can be intentional, such as when a memory is painful and people attempt to repress it; sometimes it can be unintentional and out of a person's control, such as the loss of memories as one grows older or brain damage from trauma or disease results in the inability to re-member or form new memories (Skloot 2004).⁷ Forgetting, just like remembering, varies in different settings and contexts. Something that someone forgets in one setting might be recalled in another set of circumstances. Indeed, Connerton outlines a seven part 'typology' of forgetting, which ranges from 'repressive erasure' in which history is wiped out by totalitarian regimes, to 'humiliated silence' (2008). For this latter type of forgetting, Connerton provides the example of the post-World Wars commemoration of the dead which excluded and forgot the living who were "dismembered - not remembered - men; many [who] were subject to chronic depression, frequently succumbed to alcoholism, begged in the street in order to be able to eat, and a considerable number of them ended their days in suicide" (2008: 69). Another example of how collective memory involves the process of forgetting is evident in Roberman's discussion of the commemorative activities of elderly immigrant Soviet Jewish veterans in Israel (2007). The Israeli state ignored the contributions of Soviet Jewish veterans in state commemoration of World War II, instead focusing solely on the Jewish experience of the Holocaust. However, in this case, the attempt to forget was rejected. These Red Army World War II veterans engaged in commemorating their war time experiences, when the state failed to include them, through setting up their own veterans association museum, and holding their own public commemorative ceremonies at local memorials (Roberman 2007).

This ability to hold 'contradictory' or counter memory narratives simultaneously leads to the third important theoretical lens in my work: understanding memory as

⁷ Skloot's text is a compelling and rare first-person narrative of how he experienced sudden, as opposed to degenerative, brain damage, and how it affected his memory and sense of self (2004).

'mosaic' (Fox 2010). Conceptualizing memory as a mosaic acknowledges the fact that memory, both collective and individual, is always constructed from various sources and contexts. Furthermore, it moves beyond viewing memories as problematically 'true' or 'false'. In Fox's schema, memories from different sources or different times can blur together to form a single cohesive memory. Drawing on Fischer (1994), Fox utilizes the concept of mosaic memory in his reflexive and autobiographical piece as he writes about his father's death following Alzheimer's – which, in itself, involves fragmentary and fluid relationships with memories.

“[As] people increasingly construct their sense of self out of pieces that come from many different cultural environments”.... memory [is layered] into “differently structured strata, fragmented and collaged together like mosaics in conscious and unconscious manoeuvrings” (Fischer 80-82). The mosaic metaphor speaks to how the parts (i.e. seemingly disparate memories) and whole (i.e. unified memories, or memory) of human recollection work concomitantly to frame understanding and shape interpretation. In other words, a mosaic is nothing without the tesserae, or component pieces, that comprise the “big picture”.

(Fox 2010: 8)

The lenses introduced so far relate to the phenomena of memories themselves, but there are also considerations about 'prompts' to memory, and specifically, the influences on memory of materiality and spatiality. This is a fourth key approach to memory that I used in my own project. Linkages between memory, remembrance, and space have been discussed as to how spaces themselves either facilitate or hinder memory (Burk 2003, 2010; Hayden 1995; Opp and Walsh 2010; Truc 2012). However, the relationship between memory and space is complicated and dialogic. “Our memory is framed by spatial reference points [...] but we should not forget either that [...] collective memory in turn structures the space in which we live” (Truc 2012: 148). As outlined in my introduction, this relationship between space and memory is why I conducted almost all of my interviews at FEP and the LERMM. Also, I requested that interviewees walk me through the spaces and invited them to show me exhibits or artifacts they felt were the most important to them. As becomes clearer in the following chapters, also, of course issues of performing memory are centrally concerned with material aspects of staging, juxtaposition, and audience – all inherently spatial.

Finally, though less central in this project, I also found observations on the tensions between “history” and “memory” somewhat useful analytically in my project. Several scholars in the field of memory, such as Halbwachs (Coser 1992) and Nora (1989), have conceptualized memory and history as distinct and at odds (Murphy 2005), characterizing memory as extending “back into the past a varying distance, but [...] most preoccupied with events that are within living memory” (Whitehead 2009:130) and history emerging only once a social group has disappeared, and the past consequently became removed from the sphere of thought of existing groups (Halbwachs [1941, 1952] 1992). Early distinctions between ‘memory’ and ‘history’ also had political implications, since the distinction between these two practices was “accompanied by a dichotomy [whereby...] non-literate and or ‘simple’ [societies practised memory] [...while] ‘modern’ or ‘complex’ (i.e. Western) societies [practised history]” (Argenti and Schramm 2010: 2). The popular distinction between history and memory further posits that history is ‘objective’ whereas memory is ‘subjective’. Gable and Handler however argue this distinction between memory and history cannot be sustained (2007). Both historical and memory stories are narratives influenced by the teller. An historian’s subjectivity, just as any other researcher’s (anthropologists included), has a significant and unavoidable impact on the histories they tell, and the selections they make as to what to include and what to leave out. Therefore history, just like memory, is always a situated form of knowledge.

Taken together, these five key lenses concerning memory permeated the unfolding months of my project. The account given here, of hermetically sealed theory pieces informing and illuminating fieldwork is, alas, just as flawed and problematic as imagining memory itself exists intact and separate from a social world. Rather, the *actual* dynamic which informed the recursive and messy process of *doing* ethnography involved encountering and re-encountering theory and theorists at different points while reflecting on my own research practices/ assumptions and engaging with the sites/objects/observations/interviews. I trust this becomes clear in the accounts rendered below of various moments in the process of this research.

Chapter 4.

Layers of Memory in Different Modalities

This chapter explores how memory develops, is encountered, re-membered, and layered in different modalities. First, I examine the presence of memory in material spaces (which can sometimes extend into virtual spaces). Though previous works have identified that places such as museums are sites of memory (Nora 1989; Murphy 2005), these works do not address *how* memory is actively made in these material spaces, or how memory gets complicated and bound up with 'history'. Second, I analyze how memory is actively created in the space of an interview and other social encounters. Third, I turn to myself as researcher to critique how memory impacted my ethnographic fieldwork in complex and interesting ways.

Memories within FEP, the LERMM, and Beyond

Fort Edmonton Park is a space in which memories develop and re-emerge in layered ways— thus offering a variety of instances in how memory works both individually and socially, within contradictory and partial narratives requiring animation – or work – to be re-membered. Memories are also actively created or re-encountered through various sources. Thinking about memory in terms of it being a 'mosaic', we see that a single memory may have various 'sources' of experience potentially shaping those memories.

Gable and Handler's ethnographic study of Colonial Williamsburg also found, just as I recalled from my time working at FEP, that visitors frequently interpret the history they encounter either in terms of their memories of childhood, or their parents' storytelling about their own childhood (2007). Furthermore, visitors have memories of FEP *itself* that are prompted when re-encountering the familiar space. As Fort Edmonton Park has been open since 1969, many Edmontonians have memories of visiting the park when they were children. There were countless instances when I was

working at the museum as a school programmer when parent volunteers accompanying the school groups remarked to me how they remembered going through the same program as a child. This all illustrates that when visiting FEP, visitors may re-encounter or re-member memories about FEP itself or aspects of their own lives from *multiple* sources – so that when present in the museum, memories of their own childhood visiting the museum, or their parents telling them stories about their own childhoods have the potential to mingle and affect how the space is experienced during that visit.

In terms of understanding memory as a form of work, requiring labour, it is interesting that museums such as FEP therefore act as material spaces that not only aim to teach people about the past by creating *memorable* interpretive programming, but rather that museums, particularly living history museums, and the atmospheres they create, can act as mnemonic devices for visitors. It is clear that at FEP, as Tom experienced in his many years as a costumed historical interpreter, and as I also did as a school programmer, visitors actively re-member and *share* with interpreters (and school programmers) their own memories (of their childhoods or previous visits to the museum) that are prompted by the sights, sounds, smells, objects and textures of the museum.

Just as in Fort Edmonton Park, the LERMM is a space in which memories are encountered, re-membered, and layered. I want in particular to highlight three. First, some of the exhibits appeared to function as memorials. Second, volunteers themselves regularly seemed to encounter and draw upon personal memories, since volunteers at the LERMM are mostly those who served in the Regiment, or had a family member that served. Third, the research requests the LERMM receives are often personal in nature rather than academic. Therefore, artifacts that visitors may re-encounter in the museum can prompt personal and family memories.

There are a few key aspects of the exhibits themselves that highlight how this space is saturated with 'instructions' towards memory. First, some of the exhibits overtly indicate such instruction by highlighting the individual to which an artifact or uniform belonged. In addition, there are two particular exhibits that emphasize individual memory and even act, in some sense, as memorials (see Whitmarsh (2000) and Brandt (1994) for discussion of how museums act as memorials). A typewriter sits in one

exhibit case, accompanied by the personal narrative of the individual who, after taking the typewriter from a bombed building while serving overseas in Italy, shipped the typewriter home in pieces. Recently the veteran who shipped it home (an avid volunteer at the museum) died, and, as this typewriter sits next to the booklet from his memorial service, the typewriter itself serves as a kind of memorial. Another exhibit, which Maurice and Hans both separately showed me when I asked them about their favorite parts of the museum, details the recent discovery, excavation, identification, and reburial of two bodies in France. These bodies were of men who had served in the Loyal Edmonton Regiment in World War I and whose bodies had not been found following the war. The related artifacts are accompanied by a painting of the men, which an artist created after attending the subsequent reburial of one of the men; it is on loan to the LERMM to display. The recent identification and reburial process overseas for one of the men involved his relatives and the Regiment.

While the exhibit detailing the recent reburial of the two identified individuals acted as a type of memorial, it also illustrated how volunteers at the LERMM, such as Maurice and Hans, encounter artifacts or narratives that prompt their own memories. Therefore, museums are not the only locations in which Maurice, Hans, and other volunteers actively re-call memories of their military experiences, but the museum and its material aspects (particularly exhibits and artifacts) actively *prompt* particular memories. An incidence illustrating this also occurred while I was waiting for Maurice in the museum's main office before an interview. A volunteer recounted to me how she had originally come to the museum to conduct research on her father, who had been part of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment. Based on her positive research experience, she decided to start volunteering at the museum. It is reasonable to assume that such volunteers, in their daily work at the museum, are likely to re-encounter personal or familial memories. Indeed, it was clear from how Hans and Maurice spoke about the reburial exhibit that the associated artifacts and identification of remains specifically prompted Hans' own memories of his time in the Regiment:

HB: Herbert Peterson was identified, parents were notified, and everything else like that, so I was the Commanding Officer at the time, so I led the funeral party that went to Vimy and conducted the funeral for Private Herbert Peterson. [...]. So it's a sort of interesting, overall display, and because I was involved in the funeral

and helped get that painting here and things like that, so this [pause] would be one of my little bragging stories. [...] [And] when they announced the identity of Thomas Lawless [the second soldier whose remains were uncovered], *it was done right here* (emphasis added).

Similarly, as was clear in my second interview with Maurice, while he was touring me around the museum, the objects he encounters in his volunteer work cannot be understood simply as static items from the past. Instead, certain artifacts are bound up directly with his memories and allow him to actively re-call the memories associated with them:

LH: Do you have a favorite exhibit in the museum, and if so would you like to maybe show it to me and talk about it?

MW: Well I guess the one with Colonel Stone [we walk over to the exhibit which displays a soldier's uniform] [...]. Actually, this one here is Colonel Stone. [...] He was a Major, at the time [...] and, I don't know this for a fact, but I've been told [pause] that when we first entered [pause] Ortona the Germans had [an] [pause] anti-tank gun [pause] set up around the corner and I know that was there because I looked around and [saw] it, but I've heard that he took a couple of grenades and [ran] in behind them and [killed] the Germans who were operating that gun [...] he [pause] was from Peace River country, he joined up as a Private [...] and he worked his way all up, all the way up to a Colonel in four years [...] but he was a good man and he wouldn't ask anybody to do something that he wouldn't do [...]. That was the type of guy he was.

The LERMM receives many research requests that are personal in nature. Though I rarely saw any visitors in the museum whenever I was there, this would misleadingly imply that the LERMM is slow and quiet. Instead, Hans explained that the museum receives at least a dozen research requests a week. These requests are not just from those living in Edmonton but come in from all across Canada. Such requests are in part facilitated by the strong online presence of the museum with its recently updated website. I witnessed one in-person research request when I was in the museum's office waiting for an interviewee. A woman and her father, who had served in the Regiment, were trying to find a picture that had been printed in a paper of him, from when the Queen visited Edmonton in the 1980s. Many individuals will visit the museum to donate artifacts that belonged to a family member that served in the Regiment, to find or visit artifacts already donated, or to learn more about a family member's role in the

Regiment. Such research requests can be emotionally charged and the artifacts associated with them closely tied to personal memories, with the museum acting as a space in which visitors re-encounter these memories. Hans recalls one such encounter, when a visitor re-encountered military artifacts belonging to her father that had ended up in the museum without her knowledge.

LH: Right [pause] what about, do you have a memory maybe that stands out, of helping someone do their own personal research [...] [with someone] coming in and wanting to know about family medals and what not?

HB: Yeah, I guess one - when we first opened up after the renovations to the building, we had a lady come in, and she was in her [pause] eighties maybe late seventies, and her father had served in the Loyal Edmonton Regiment in World War II [pause] and she had a small donation of military artifacts that she wanted to donate to the museum, and again, I was just sort of sitting at the desk, and Kathleen [the Collections Manager] was looking after her, and she goes "that name sounds familiar," and that's where Kathleen's really good, she goes, that name sounds familiar, she goes to the computer and [HB makes sounds and hand gestures mimicking the sound and action of typing on a keyboard] looks it up and says "oh yeah we have a few other artifacts that were, that belong to your father that are already in the museum" and, we have his medals. She goes "you have his medals?" [Kathleen] goes "yes" and she goes "well those were lost years, years ago!" I said, well they're downstairs, so we [pause] went to the computer, we found out what drawer they were in, what spot they were in and pulled them out [makes sounds and gesture mimicking pulling something out a drawer] pulled out her father's medals and - just a standard World War II, five standard medals from World War II, and they were all court mounted et cetera and [pause] ...she held them and ... the tears are welling up in her eyes, and she was holding them to her heart, and things like that. And then after she sort of recovered she goes "well, how did you [pause] obtain these," [Kathleen] says "I'm not sure," so we went into the filing cabinet [makes sound and gesture of mimicking going through a filing cabinet], pulled out [...] purchased by [pause] Captain Chris Atkin at a garage sale for five dollars [LH and HB laugh at this].

HB: "My sister said she lost them! She sold them!"

Overall, all of these instances of memory at the LERMM illustrate that though individual and social memory are always bound up and implicated with each other, and

while individual memories may be intentionally shared and made public within museums, individual memories are still prompted by and re-membered through material aspects of a museum such as the LERMM. In the narrative above, the emotional weight of that artifact, sold at a garage sale, ending up at the LERMM, only to be found by accident, is not experienced within a larger social group, but by an individual to whom the artifact had particular significance.

Memory or History?

It is clear that memory is utilized, encountered, experienced, and re-membered at Fort Edmonton Park and the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum. However, FEP and the LERMM both identify and present themselves as *history* museums. FEP's primary goal is to detail Edmonton's history from around 1846 to 1929 while the LERMM is devoted to the history of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment. My interviews and research encounters suggest that the presence of memory in museums can complicate problematic claims that the practices of memory and history form a strict binary pair. My research suggests instead the boundaries between the two are porous, and they can be difficult to distinguish.

For example, at FEP, memories can be used as sources for interpretive programming – both those in spatial and cyber locations. Ryan recounted how a key figure talked about on 1920 street, Wilfrid “Wop” May is commemorated online. “Wop” May’s son runs this website, which the museum in turn uses as a secondary source, to re-count “Wop” May’s contributions to Edmonton’s history, World War I, and the history of aviation.

RM: We like to try to use notable figures from Edmonton as a touchstone for telling stories. [...Wop May's son] has been maintaining a website about him and telling his stories, his father's stories that is, on a website for, I *think* fifteen years now [laughter entering voice] since

basically the advent of the Internet, he's been telling his father's story on there.⁸

When FEP uses the memories of “Wop” May, as told by “Wop” May’s son to shape their own narratives, does this practice constitute memory, or are these memories used to create historical narratives and performances?

Again, the literature and my research both suggest attempting to concretely distinguish between memory and history is not always possible or productive. During our first interview, I asked Hans about how he understands the differences between memory and history; he did not see a stark difference between the overall goals of memory and history, but rather spoke of how they differ in detail and point of view:

LH: I was wondering what you think the difference is between history [...] and how those differ - how history especially of military conflicts might differ from the individual memories of these events.

HB: Well first of all the official histories never go into significant detail [...] alright [pause] so, it's a very [longer pause] broad brush view of how the operation occurred and the individual recollections are probably more vivid, more detailed, because they can name names and it was about their group of five or six people, as opposed to what the thousand man Battalion did on this particular operation on this day, so [pause] that's the big difference between the two, so, is the individual detail.

This suggests the differences between memory and history can be blurry. Similarly, as Sturken argues:

personal memory, cultural memory, and history do not exist within neatly defined boundaries. Rather, memories and memory objects can move

⁸ The website Ryan referred to is: www.wopmay.com. According to the website, “since 1996 this memorial has been an ongoing project of “Wop’s” son Denny May and Denny’s friend and neighbour Owen Brierley to celebrate the most extraordinary life of one of Canada’s heroes [and details] the many experiences “Wop” had as a WWI fighter pilot, a bush pilot, a community leader, and a humanitarian” (The Chronicles of W.R. (Wop) May Website; Homepage 2011). I have included the name “Wop” in quotation marks to denote that this was not his actual name, but rather his nickname. This same convention appears at least once on the website. In an email to me, Ryan explained that “Wop” “was a family nickname bestowed by a toddler who couldn’t pronounce the proper name Wilfrid, and simply said, “Wop”, and that this is the spelling which family members perpetuate.” (Email Correspondence with Ryan Mullen, September 29, 2012).

from one realm to another, shifting meaning and context. Thus, personal memories can sometimes be subsumed into history and elements of cultural memory can exist in concert with historical narratives. (1997: 5-6)

While these abstract conventions about the difference between memory and history cannot be sustained, as practices they do still differ in some ways, and therefore have different potentials and limitations in museum narratives, performances, and exhibits. This was Tom's view in his discussion of how FEP represents World War I on 1920 street:

LH: Can you recall an incident where maybe something puzzled, surprised, or excited you during your involvement with portraying the First World War, and the programs you've worked with?

TL: [...] I think the other thing that really excited me was how appropriate it was to use - to bring this into the story now, now that all these [pause] all the veterans of the First World War are [pause] almost gone, and this event is passing - there are cultures and certain aspects of history that make a [distinction] between history that's actually remembered, and history that's passed into - or *I should say, past as it's remembered, versus the past that [pause] nobody is alive who actually remembers it* (emphasis added).

TL: [...] And it's very important when these, when you make the transition from one to the other, and so this is the time, and the last ten years when [longer pause] *the First World War is passing out of living memory, and that not only I think behooves us to discuss it [pause] and add it to our interpretative program here, but it also frees us a little bit* (emphasis added) [pause] again from that idea of the Legion protesting the bombing panel [at another museum], it's because [longer pause] ... those legion members were the soldiers who did it, they remember that, and they don't want to [longer pause] talk about it in necessarily a dispassionate manner, because it's something *they* did, and [pause] nothing against them, and you know I can certainly see it from their point of view too [pause] they don't want to discuss it [longer pause] in that sort of way. We're a little bit more free now and I don't want to say we're free, to discuss the First World War, with a little less [longer pause] passion, and a little less personal stake in making sure Canadian soldiers and Canadians are portrayed as the heroes that there are good guys and bad guys, that good always triumphs, and that yes, there were bad things about the First World War, or the opposite too, because a lot of people want to paint the First World War as this awful, horrendous thing [pause] that ... was the prototypical *bad* war, as opposed to the Second World War, which

had a, you know you were defeating the Nazis. That was real evil and you had to do it [pause] so in a roundabout way what I'm saying is this is the time when we start to be able to [pause] have an easier time discussing the First World War, divorced from good, divorced from evil, divorced from *personal experience* (emphasis added) [pause] and can look at it and see what we can learn from this, how did people react when faced with these decisions, how did we, how did we navigate this immense, an immensely important historical event [...] without having to look on it [longer pause] as somebody's personal story, that you're going to offend somebody's personal story about that. Now obviously that still exists and the First World War is part of Canada's national myth making, Vimy Ridge - ... there was an article a couple of years ago that was great, when somebody dared to suggest that Vimy Ridge wasn't actually that important a battle in the First World War [pause] and Canadians were just up in arms because this is part of their, it's part of their national heritage that this was what they took, what nobody else took and it turned the tide of the war, and it's part of that national myth. So there's still obviously lots of national myth caught up in it, but *personal myths not so much, and I think that's an opportunity to tell a story and to provoke thought and start a conversation* (emphasis added).

In this conversation, Tom expresses that World War I is moving out of living memory and into history, which provides the potential for approaching this event in a different way. According to one scholar, the 'psychological' definition of the length of living memory is three generations (Hunt 2010). Hunt defines the process of the shift from living memory to a sense of something being in the past as follows: "the experiencing generation [has] a memory of what they have experienced, their children [take] on those memories in a weaker but nevertheless still memoric sense, and their children perhaps still having a sense of memory from listening to their grandparents" (2010: 103). However, this view presumes that an event passes smoothly from 'living memory' to 'history' as a function of chronological time alone and that at a certain point an event becomes 'distant' enough in the past to be considered 'history'. This ignores that the intergenerational transmission of memory is a highly complex process (Argenti and Schramm 2010; Hirsch 2008). Memories of certain events are being kept alive in multiple spaces and forms. Later generations continue to actively re-call and re-member events such as the World Wars through multiple modalities, even if what is being re-membered and how it is re-membered shifts as time passes. These modalities include museums, but also graphic novels, documentaries, academic research, oral history projects, or historical fiction.

Tom for example currently draws on graphic novels or works of historical fiction to shape the representation of World War I at FEP.

TL: [There's a] fourth source [I used to shape the narrative of World War I at FEP] which I find really *valuable* and is a pet project of mine - graphic novels and comic books, which I just think have this *amazing* capacity to show and tell at the same time, much like a museum, and to give that visual reference, which is so striking, while pairing it with text, but not overloading you with text at the same time [...] so there's a number of fictional war comics that I included in some of the program writing.

As World War I continues to move beyond living memory (three generations), it will be interesting to see whether the narratives or representations of this event change within museums, as Tom seems to think will be the case. Will it then also begin for World War II and other more recent military conflicts?

However, since memory and history are both bound up with politics and power, the processes through which an event passes from 'living memory' to 'history' is not as simplistic as time passing. Tom's comments are also suggestive that events such as the World Wars, which are quite significant within national myths and a sense of Canadian identity, are events that will continue to be approached with caution in museums attempting to discuss them. Indeed, the power of collective memories and shared histories (even those that are *invented*) is that can they become bound up with and act to stabilize national identities (Anderson [1983] 2006; Hobsbawm and Ranger [1983] 1996). Though the veterans of World War I have all passed, I repeat the interesting observation Tom had about the Canadian understanding of Vimy Ridge.

TL: The First World War is part of Canada's national myth making, Vimy Ridge -...there was an article a couple of years ago that was great, when somebody dared to suggest that Vimy Ridge wasn't actually that important a battle in the First World War [pause] and Canadians were just up in arms because this is part of their, it's part of their national heritage that this was what they took, what nobody else took and it turned the tide of the war, and it's part of that national myth. So there's still obviously lots of national myth caught up in that.

Interviewing Maurice White: Interviews as Sites of Memory

My first interview with Maurice White in particular is illustrative of the complexities of memory, not only within museum spaces and social interactions, but also within an interview. Typically in interviews we are asking our participants to *re-member* (Fabian 2007; Madison 2012). It was therefore necessary for me to unpack the challenges I noticed during my first interview with Maurice. My analysis of the various factors that impacted our first interaction additionally speaks to the complexities of a veteran carrying out memory work within a museum. I wrote in my fieldnotes following our first interview how:

The main thing I noticed during the interview was the difficulty with which he had remembering things. This could have been for a few reasons though – the questions I asked weren't that clear (he also had to ask me to repeat them at times [...] – as a result the interview was much shorter than I expected [...]. He had some stories/memories that seemed to pop up, and would tell them to me at that point, but my questions themselves didn't 'prompt' [these memories]. Also, perhaps [it was difficult to talk] about memories of the *process of remembrance itself*, which in a sense was what I was asking [him to do]. (Fieldnotes December 7, 2011)

In our first interview I learned that Maurice had participated in a significant number of interviews and documentary films detailing his wartime experiences. These previous interviews included an extensive oral history interview for the LERMM, telephone interviews with a graduate student at the University of Toronto writing his/her thesis about how the military and civilian populations interacted with each other during the Battle of Ortona, and an oral history interview for the nationally funded *Memory Project*, which aims to collect and preserve the oral histories of World War II veterans (Todd 2010). He had also been interviewed on-screen for a number of documentary films. These films include *Bloody Italy* (Film, 2005, Dir. Wayne Abbott) in which Maurice is interviewed in former sites of combat in Italy, the Devil's Brigade (a four part documentary) and two other documentary films which are scheduled to be released in the next year or so. According to Maurice, the first is called *The Paratroopers*, and the other is about Tommy Prince, the most decorated Aboriginal soldier who served in the Second World War and Korean War. Tommy Prince was Maurice's friend after both served in the 1st Special Service Forces, which was comprised of Canadian and

American soldiers (Interview with Maurice White: March 21, 2012).⁹ Learning of all these interviews, I became aware that our interviews were simply two instances of many in which he had the opportunity to share his memories. Therefore, prior to our interviews Maurice had already put a considerable amount of work into re-membering and narrating his experiences for a variety of audiences. However, it was clear that all of his previous interviews directly discussed his wartime memories. Since the original direction of my research was to try to learn about how the World Wars are currently commemorated, I did not ask him specific questions about his military experiences, as I believe Maurice expected I would. Instead I focused on asking Maurice about his memories of volunteering at the museum. Therefore Maurice's intentions or expectations for our interview did not match the ones I had.

Upon further reflection, my interview questions for Maurice were too abstract and distanced from the work that he does. Asking him to re-member his work in commemorating World War II didn't make sense, because as it became apparent during our conversations, my attempt to separate his memories of World War II from his volunteer work at the museum was misguided. In reviewing our transcribed interviews, I noticed there were many instances where he would share with me memories of his experiences overseas, even though I did not ask him directly about them. In fact, in our first interview I avoided asking him questions about his military experiences, since due to the parameters of institutional research ethics, I did not want to risk prompting negative emotions that he wouldn't expect to encounter on a daily basis. However, the focus and purpose of his volunteer work at the museum is to *re-member* and *share* his memories with a public, whether he is visiting schools around Remembrance Day, volunteering at the museum, or talking to researchers like me, and part of the *impact* of these memories is that he does still get emotional sharing them.

⁹ Tommy Prince did not serve in the Loyal Edmonton Regiment and is therefore not discussed at the museum itself. It should be emphasized that Tommy Prince served in World War II and the Korean War, yet he and other Aboriginal soldiers were not given the same post-war treatment as other veterans by the Canadian Government. It was not until after Tommy Prince's death that Ottawa "agreed to compensate First Nations veterans for the benefits and assistance they did not receive after their military service" (The National (TV) 2002: Status Indians Compensated for Benefits Denied).

An alternate and very straightforward explanation for the difficulties expressed in my fieldnotes following our first interview is that as Maurice pointed out to me during our second interview, he had trouble hearing me because I speak very quickly whenever I am nervous. Finally, as I explore in the next section, the fact that Maurice did not often have answers to my questions was in part related to him needing particular conditions or prompts for re-remembering. Therefore, my interviews with him are illustrative of some of the complexities of memory.

Following my first interview with Maurice at the LERMM I was invited to watch the film *Bloody Italy* (Film, 2005, Dir. Wayne Abbott) on an office computer. Maurice shows this film during his school visits before inviting questions from students. His role in this documentary is two-fold. First, it contains portions of an interview with him talking about his experiences serving in Italy during World War II. Second, it films him (and other veterans) visiting and discussing certain places in Italy where he was during the war. What struck me about watching this film directly after our interview was the clarity of his memories in the film, particularly when he was being filmed *in situ*. This contrasted with his ability to recall detailed memories in our interview. Though I have already outlined the possible conditions of our interview that affected Maurice's memory, and though in a documentary film there is the possibility for rehearsal before speaking, I interpreted this contrast as one which illustrates the strong connection between memory work and emplacement. It was clear from the film that for Maurice, the places where his military experiences took place continue to act as mnemonic devices that facilitate his remembrance (Filippucci 2010). At one point in the film, while standing on the same ridge he did in 1943 when the Regiment was making its way to Agira, Italy, Maurice expresses that the landscape "brings everything back, you're looking down the ridge with 18 year old eyes, not 80 year old eyes" (Interview with Maurice White in *Bloody Italy* (Film, 2005, Dir. Wayne Abbott).

It was clear that the conditions of our interview, and my questions in particular, did not facilitate the kinds of responses I was hoping Maurice might offer. The fact that he could not re-call the memories I was asking him to recall in our interview should not be conflated with him forgetting these events in general. Asking him very open ended questions about his memories of participating in remembrance projects through his volunteer work at the museum did not create for Maurice conditions in which he could

easily draw upon these memories. In fact, he specified during our first interview that he could not just sit and recall memories of his wartime experiences, but rather had to be asked specific questions in order for him to access these memories.

LH: So what types of things do you talk to [students] about when you go to the schools?

MW: Well [...] have you ever seen the DVD [...] *Bloody Italy*?

LH: No I haven't seen that yet.

MW: Okay, I'm in that DVD so I [...] have that shown to the children and then they have a question [and] answer period.

LH: Oh okay.

MW: But for me just to start talking giving a, telling a story, I find it very difficult, where if they can ask questions [pause] it brings back memories [pause] cause I've forgotten a lot.

LH: Oh I see okay.

MW: Thank goodness [short laugh].

The fact that Maurice needs questions to prompt him to re-member differed from the way a former fellow volunteer re-membered. After our first interview, other museum staff discussed with me how the volunteer commemorated in the typewriter exhibit would go on school visits and tell his wartime memories without requiring any prompting. In contrast, the film *Bloody Italy* (Film, 2005, Dir. Wayne Abbott) is a central and necessary tool for Maurice and his memory work. The fact that Maurice uses this documentary to prompt his memories reminded me that memory must be effected *by work*; that is, memories are not pre-given, stable 'narratives' or 'images' but instead must be created and enacted in often recursive ways (Fabian 2007).

However, at times, memory can be out of our control. When Maurice spoke of forgetting, he attributed the process to what he feels is the 'nature' of the human mind. This segment of our interview was one of the cases in which he brought up his wartime memories without me asking directly about them.

MW: [Long pause] I might share with you my experience in Holland.

LH: Okay, sure, yeah.

MW: For some reason, something happened [longer pause] and, like I was in [...] Holland [pause, next part said almost to himself] May, April [voice becomes more certain] February, March, April, May, somewhere like that, 'bout three months, I remember one, only one incidence [...] that I was crossing the Iso river and everything else was, like I wasn't there. I wiped it out of my mind.

LH: Oh really?

MW: Yup.

LH: [Longer pause] So [it is] just kind of a blank, a blank spot in your in your memories?

MW: Yes, yup [pause] that's nature's way of preserving [slight laughter in voice] your own sanity.

LH: Right.

MW: I *really* believe that.

This statement suggests he feels this act of forgetting was something that happened *naturally*, as a process that was out of his control. However, in another instance, Maurice conveys the sense that at times, he might intentionally work to forget other aspects of his military experiences. This happens when he works with artifacts at the LERMM, which have the potential to prompt memories he does not want to re-call while working to catalogue these artifacts.

LH: Okay and you mentioned as well that today you were just downstairs doing - working with artifacts [...] does that kind of bring back memories at all when you see those items?

MW: No, no not really, not really, it - I try not to think about the results of it you know I just do it.

LH: Right, they're just, just things.

MW: Yeah, yeah.

LH: That you have to catalogue.

MW: Yeah.

Stating that he tries not to “think about the results of it” suggests Maurice means, in order to be able to work weekly with the artifacts at the LERMM, he must forget what those artifacts have the potential to bring up for him – possibly memories of war, death, sadness, fear. There are various types of and catalysts for forgetting, some which emphasize the need to rethink the notion that forgetting only constitutes a loss

(Connerton 2008). Instead, in particular contexts, forgetting can be a process through which something positive is gained.

The assumption that re-membering is beneficial and desirable is reflected in the prevalent understanding of interviews in general which has developed through the popular and media fuelled concept of the cinematic 'interview society'. Denzin describes the interview society as that which "has turned the confessional mode of discourse into a public form of entertainment. [Furthermore] the world of private troubles, the site of the authentic, or real, self, has become a public commodity" (2001: 28). The value placed upon the confessional within the 'interview society' implies that re-membering and sharing such memories publicly are always beneficial or cathartic processes.

Maurice's approach to his experiences of forgetting therefore clearly illustrates that forgetting cannot be viewed simplistically as the binary (and necessarily negative) opposite to re-membrance. Perhaps as part of the 'interview society', and perhaps as a legacy of Freud's theories of repressed memories, "making the traumatic, repressed communal memories open, explicit, and conscious is said to have healing power. We are asked to believe that this is the only way to overcome the irrationality that springs from past traumas, and the only way to gain peace of mind" (Margalit 2002: 5). By contrast, Maurice's positive appraisal of forgetting troubling memories suggests another option. Maurice feels that forgetting this stressful period of time was beneficial to him.

Memory Work as Mosaic

As an ethnographer, I need to subject myself as well to scrutiny in these processes. Beyond the simplistic admission of age, gender, ethnicity and class (Jackson 2005), it is important to interrogate my own assumptions, practices, observations, and iterative interpretations. It is here that I return to Fox's ideas of mosaic memory.

I did not find this theoretical framework until later in the research process, during the stages of analysis and writing. Before finding Fox's article I thought and wrote about my own experience of memory during ethnographic fieldwork in terms of certain memories being 'true' and others being 'false' or 'warped'. In the first draft of my thesis I

wrote the following description and analysis of what I at first problematically termed my 'warped memory' of Maurice White.

It took me until March [2012] to transcribe our first interview. After the transcription was completed, I walked over to the museum on a Wednesday afternoon to give Maurice a copy of it and to schedule a second follow-up interview with him. However, something strange happened when I saw Maurice the second time. When he walked into the office, I experienced something which I have come to call 'warped memory', and which further solidified my agreement with Fabian who argues that "memory and remembering are involved in every step of ethnography from field research to documentation, interpretation, and presenting our findings" (2007: 25).

When Maurice entered the main office of the museum, I was quite surprised because the image I had of him in my memory was not at all what he actually looked like seeing him for a second time. I had remembered him as an elderly gentleman with glasses, who hunched over and moved slowly. Instead, Maurice greeted me with an easy smile, no glasses on his face, and moved without any trouble.

*In thinking about this warped memory, I came to later realize that how I remembered Maurice after our first interview is actually the memory that I have of my grandfather on my father's side. Before he died he was around Maurice's age, had glasses, and walked very slowly. While I was not close with my grandfather and Maurice looks nothing like he did, clearly my personal memories affected how I remembered Maurice. I also feel as though my perception of Maurice from our interview was influenced by the quality of his voice, which I found very difficult to transcribe. Its wispy quality, which seemed to have gaps on the audio recording due to older age, made him seem older and more fragile in my mind. Watching a scene of him in the documentary film he participated in, *Bloody Italy*, part of which he shows during the introduction to his presentations in school classrooms may also have led to this 'warped memory' that I had of him. What stuck with me when watching this film immediately after my first interview with him, was a particularly vulnerable moment in which he cries as he tells the camera he still regrets having to kill a German soldier on Christmas Day. At this point in the interview for the film, he casts his eyes down and away, with tears in his eyes. It is the first time he does not make eye-contact with whoever is off-screen as he says:*

*"And I killed a German on Christmas Day. That was sadness. It still bothers me. It was hell to have to kill somebody on Christmas. [Pause] You can see the poor guy drop. [Pause]. You know, he had a mother too" (Interview with Maurice White in *Bloody Italy* (Film), 2005, Directed by Wayne Abbott).*

This vulnerability may also have led me to remember him as being older and more fragile than he actually is in person. This experience, and the stark

contradiction between my memory of him following our first interview, and seeing him after transcribing our interview and looking nothing like I remembered him to be, illustrates just how tricky memory can be when it comes to ethnographic fieldwork. The memory of the researcher is just as [prone to mistakes and slippages] as those we are interviewing. Our memories and impressions of those we interact with can also be affected by many different things, and thus such memories and impressions might not actually be 'true' when we re-encounter the spaces or people we are writing about.

(First Thesis Draft, May 2012, with the quote from the film added November 2012)

However, after reading Fox's use of mosaic memory, I saw that these 'warped' memories that I experienced were not inaccurate but instead quite analytically valuable. What is most compelling about the various 'parts' that made up my original memory of Maurice, such as my memory of my grandfather, and my memories from transcription and watching *Bloody Italy* (Film, 2005, Dir. Wayne Abbott), is that different strands of influence combined to form a particular memory. This happened despite the fact that the 'parts' that made up the 'whole' were contradictory. The other implication is that in my ethnographic study of memory, I realized that my understanding of memory was not just a theoretical one, derived from scholarly arguments, but experiential as well. Memory work formed the basis of my research, not only in content, but as a key feature in practicing ethnographic fieldwork.

By "including personal memories as data in [my thesis] to [contextualize] them and [open] them to analytical scrutiny" (Gallinat 2010: 40), I additionally saw how my memories of growing up in Edmonton, and those I developed during fieldwork, contributed to another instance of 'mosaic memory'. While analyzing my research materials it became clear that the memories and reflections that I developed during fieldwork were not the only types of memory influencing my research. Just as in my encounters with Maurice, my memories of growing up in Edmonton had just as much of a role to play. I initially viewed this influence negatively, and again wrote about these situations as cases of 'false' or 'warped' memory. In my first draft of this thesis, I wrote the following:

Finally, as my research progressed, I realized that my own memories of growing up in Edmonton were not necessarily reliable, and in some cases completely wrong. The most significant example of this was my memory of

the location of major Remembrance Day ceremonies. In my research proposal, I had written:

I use [the] term [commemoration] rather than ‘memorializing’ since not all ‘remembrance projects’ involve the creation of a memorial. For example, the Remembrance Day ceremonies in Edmonton Alberta take place on the University Campus rather than at the World War I and II Cenotaph downtown (potentially due to space and weather constraints since the Cenotaph is outdoors across from City Hall with not much space to place seating. (Research Prospectus September 2011)

However, this statement was based completely on my false memories of Remembrance Day ceremonies in Edmonton. Since the ceremony at the University was the one I was most familiar with, having attended the University of Alberta for my undergraduate education, I somehow came to think that this was the major ceremony held in Edmonton. When living downtown upon returning to Edmonton, I found out that there is indeed a ceremony held at the downtown Cenotaph, and has been there for some time. (First Thesis Draft, May 2012)

Likely the reason why I re-remembered the Remembrance Day ceremonies in Edmonton this way was because I would have been on the University campus around the time of November 11th, where I was completing my undergraduate degree, but never had a reason to go downtown on Remembrance Day. These two examples of mosaic memory illustrate Fox’s argument (2010) that disparate and conflicting memories from different times and sources can and *do* mesh together to form a single yet still complex and layered *memory*.

Because of the complexities of memory, some could view it as a limitation that for some of my analysis of FEP, I drew on my own memories from working there. It is important to address the fact that these memories of FEP developed *before* I entered graduate school and undertook the anthropological and ethnographic training which I employed in my research. This means that the types of observations I originally made at FEP were ‘collected’ with a very different intention than when I re-remembered them in the context of research. Gallinat ponders the difficulties that conflicting memories and intentions might present, but in the end eloquently defends the use of personal memories as data in ethnography. Her work utilized her memories of growing up in Eastern Germany as a source of data. Though these memories were established prior to her anthropological training, she recognizes that her *re-collection* of these memories

did take place within the context of research. She wonders whether this could mean that “[she] only recall[s] instances that suit [her] intended argument, or that [she] frame[d] [her] memories in a preordained fashion” (Gallinat 2010: 39). However, as Halbwachs’ early work illustrates, memory is inherently presentist, in that its selection, concerns, and intentions are unavoidably grounded in the *present* ([1941, 1952] 1992). Furthermore, since research often involves asking our informants to re-member, their narratives can just as likely be fashioned to suit a personal agenda. “This personal agenda will have been influenced by their interpretations of my research project and my personality” (Gallinat 2010: 40). Additionally, every ethnographer will encounter memory in her ethnographic fieldwork since memory is a fundamental part of everyday life. This is why it is so important to critique and assess how memory *works* in the research process, since it is so complex.

Conclusion

In this chapter I explored some of the various modalities in which memory is developed, encountered, and layered. I assert that memories are not pre-given or concrete but rather must be *actively made* in material or cyber spaces, interviews, and a researcher’s fieldwork experiences. The complex presence of memory in museums, and its perceived potentials or limitations, calls into question the strict and binary distinctions commonly made between the practices of memory and history. My interviews with Maurice were particularly illustrative of the complexities of memory work in general, but also within the LERMM, where Maurice’s wartime memories are central to his volunteer work. I considered how for various reasons, my interviews with him, as acts of re-membering, did not necessarily facilitate re-membrance. Next, I examined how my interviews with Maurice helped me to better understand how memory work involves *both* re-membering and forgetting, as well as some of the complexities of the process of forgetting. Finally, I ended with a critically reflexive analysis of how memory *worked* in my fieldwork, using the concept of mosaic memory to unpack and complicate my earlier thesis drafts. The layered and contradictory nature of my own memory work emphasizes that ethnographers must critically assess the ways in which memory is used as a source of ‘knowledge’ during the practice of ethnographic research.

Chapter 5.

Memory, Authenticity, and Museums

The presence of memory in museums is further related to the issue of authenticity. Just as with personal memory narratives claiming a type of authority – the ‘I was there, I know how this happened’ – so too can museums cultivate, either intentionally or unintentionally, narratives that assert authenticity and accuracy. For example, FEP’s website invites visitors to experience the past *the way it would have been* (Fort Edmonton Park Website: Homepage 2012). Though Tom and Ryan clearly recognize that museums are never able to express every perspective or aspect of historical narratives as told within museums, what actually takes place in the material spaces of museums suggests subtle or overt claims to accuracy are still prevalent in museum practices. Museums therefore have a tense relationship with ‘reality’. They deal with people and places that existed, and events that happened, but they are also interpreting, and re-creating these ‘real’ things through artifacts, exhibits, storyboards, narratives, or performances. Attention to the interplay between memory, authenticity and museums is important because any claims that a performance, narrative, or memory reflects an ‘authentic’ and therefore ‘objective’ and fully knowable past is bound up with issues of power. Who gets to claim that one memory or narrative is ‘false’ or ‘inaccurate’ while another is ‘true’? What are accepted as suitable or ‘accurate’ sources of knowledge used to shape the exhibits, narratives, and performances that take place in museums?

I use a number of interrelated terms in this Chapter: authenticity, accuracy, and an 'aesthetic of objectivity'.¹⁰ The boundaries between these three terms are blurry and they are all processes and discourses that negotiate 'the real'. "Authenticity conjures up images of people, as animate subjects, verifying inanimate objects [...with] a specialist allying his or her expertise [to objects]" (Jackson 2005: 14). This is related to the 'museum effect' by which an artifact, narrative, or performance may not necessarily have an inherent value, but gains value and 'credibility' through virtue of being included in a museum (Magelssen 2007). Authenticity in museums therefore requires particular social relationships. Museums assert they are able to act as specialists through continuously carrying out rigorous historical research and attention to detail, with the understanding that visitors will accept a museum's authority to tell particular histories, memories, and narratives (Magelssen 2007). Accuracy in museums is about trying to find out what the 'real' was – whether that is an event, a person, or a historical practice. Primary historical sources are often conceptualized to provide more 'accurate' depictions of history, as opposed to secondary historical sources. What is conceptualized as 'accurate' versus what is 'inaccurate' is also related to authority (Magelssen 2007). At the same time, claims to accuracy do not have to be 'real' or 'true', since what matters most is that such memories or histories *feel* or appear real for a group of people or individuals (Burk 2010; Fox 2010; Megill 1998). Finally, an 'aesthetic of objectivity' (Snyder-Young 2010) is similar to accuracy. This aesthetic involves appealing to the real either through asserting performances, research methodologies, or histories and memories are accurate and reflect 'real' empirical experiences, or through simply failing to emphasize or address the processes by which such performances, methodologies, histories, or memories were selected and assembled (Snyder-Young 2010). An 'aesthetic of objectivity' draws upon "authenticity – the use of people who appear to be real, and

¹⁰ Denzin (2003) and Snyder-Young (2010) both reference the work of Trinh T. Minh-ha (1991) to define the elements of an 'aesthetic of objectivity' which is used frequently in "cinematic and televised representations of interviews" (Snyder-Young 2010: 884) as well as many performances. An 'aesthetic of objectivity' is comprised of: "the relentless pursuit of naturalism...authenticity – the use of people who appear to be real, and locating these people in "real" situations, the filmmaker/interviewer presented as an observer, not as a person who creates what is seen, heard, and read...the capture of objectivity reality, the dramatization of truth, [and] the presentation of actual facts in a credible way, with people telling them" (Trinh 1991, quoted in Denzin 2003: 74 and Snyder-Young 2010: 884).

locating these people in “real” situations [...] and the presentation of actual facts in a credible way” (Trinh 1991, quoted in Denzin 2003: 74).

My experiences and memories from working at FEP significantly shaped my original understanding of and approach to memory, authenticity, and museums. Through this lens (my memories of working at FEP), I viewed the memory work at the LERMM as more authentic than the work at FEP, and that FEP as a living history museum was capable of ‘accurately’ portraying the past. Additionally, my early analysis suggested such accuracy was *possible* for museums to achieve through hard work. This chapter charts the stops and starts of my early ideas, to a shift in theoretical perspective, which modified my later re-analysis of my research materials. Opening up my own analyses to analytical scrutiny proved to be a productive learning process. My shift in theoretical lenses also had consequences for understanding how issues of authenticity are bound up directly with power and the politics of the everyday within museums.

Memory and Authenticity in Museum Spaces: Early Analysis

Maybe [I] also feel like I am missing the link of ‘authenticity’ – i.e. having memories of being told about these events by family members who themselves experienced them (experience by ‘proxy’) – therefore I feel almost like not being able to write about the topic that I have no ‘ownership’ of – although I realize that this idea/notion is itself problematic and is an assumption on my part.

(Fieldnotes November 17, 2011)

My [interview] questions asked of Tom and Ryan weren’t *just* [different from those I asked Maurice and Hans] because [of the fact] I knew Tom and Ryan from before my research in a different capacity, also because of feeling ‘wrong’ about asking those who had served ‘offensive’ questions. Since [Hans and Maurice have less] ‘distance’ from the subject [what I did not ask them was whether they feel there are any messages left out in how the World Wars are remembered at the LERMM, though I asked Ryan and Tom this question].

(Fieldnotes February 17, 2012)

During my interviews at the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum, I originally assumed that there was a direct link between military experience and the authenticity and authority to remember and commemorate these events. I now

understand Tom and Ryan's narratives and stories were just *different* experiences, reflecting the process of costumed historical interpretation rather than military service. Memories always "present to us one moment of history and how that moment *in* history is *remembered* through a *particular* subjectivity" (Madison 2012: 35). Furthermore, that is always, necessarily, a constructed framing. "Experience is at once always already an interpretation and something that needs to be interpreted. What counts as experience is neither self-evident nor straightforward, it is always contested and always therefore political" (Scott 1991: 797). This applies to ethnographers as much as it does to our participants. Ethnographers constantly negotiate how to translate, make (relative) sense of, or write about our empirical experiences in the field. This refutes the dangers anthropologists have noted in arguments for "authenticity as a function of long-term empirical fieldwork" (Jackson 2005: 23). In both cases, the 'I was there' argument is used to establish empirical authority and knowledge, without addressing how the 'I' is a particular one that impacts and shapes research and what counts as knowledge.

At first I thought that the possibilities of interviewing individuals from two different museums would allow me to see differing issues that arise in the memory work of those who have a military background at the LERMM versus those that do not (the interpreters at FEP). Upon reflection, this distinction affected the types of questions I found myself asking or avoiding during my interviews. I asked Ryan and Tom what they thought was missing from the World War I narratives and performances on 1920 street at FEP. I did not ask Maurice and Hans whether they thought there was anything missing from the narratives and exhibits at the LERMM. At the time I avoided this question because I perceived Maurice and Hans as being more directly and personally invested in their volunteer work at the LERMM because it involves their personal memories. It was presumptuous of me to assume that Maurice and Hans haven't already considered what they feel is missing from the LERMM and what they feel should be included. In hesitating to ask them these questions I might have missed out on interesting conversations.

When I began ethnographic fieldwork, I realize now the influence of my memories of working at FEP from 2009-2010 on my initial analyses. My understanding of the interpretive work at FEP drew from what I conceptualized as the practice of 'authenticity at all costs'. I re-called some of my co-workers modified their behaviours,

speech, and movements, in ways that were not safe or practical in order to avoid what they perceived as anachronistic actions. When I brought this up during my interviews with Tom and Ryan, they didn't agree that these practices were as extreme as I presented them to be. They instead emphasized that interpretation is always a process of selection, and that it is impossible to ever 'get it right'. It was clear from my interviews with them that in their work at FEP, they have also thought extensively about issues of authenticity in living history museums. However, my interview questions for Tom and Ryan illustrate that my own assumptions about authenticity shaped my interview questions and interpretation of my research materials.

LH: So one of the things that I find interesting about my own time working at the [museum], and then kind of the concept of living history museums in general, is this concept of authenticity [...] so in your opinion how accurate, and I know that you talked about it in the first interview as well, but in your opinion how accurate do you think one should aim to be in the act of interpretation, and where would you draw the line in authentically representing history, if at all.

RM: [Longer pause] Yeah, there's no way we can be a hundred percent authentic, and I don't remember if I said that last time [...] I mean the only way you could be a hundred percent authentic [longer pause] even then you wouldn't reach it, you know [...] cause in the act of doing it you're still a museum [...] you still have this objective to talk about it, the only way you could be authentic is to *be* those people [...]. I think [pause] visitor's perception of belief, of an authentic experience is much different from the interpreters', as there's a relationship there [pause] and the interpreter *knows* that they're not [that character] and the visitor knows it too [...]. We as interpreters would say things [pause] and we know the people in the past wouldn't have said those things, but we say them openly because we want to provoke, and so I think that's an important aspect of the job, is to provoke, so sometimes we will *do* things that are inauthentic [pause] because it gives [...] a better sense of what authentic would be, it's kind of strange.

LH: [...] It's interesting...to think about [...] definitely the emphasis on authenticity, which I think is an interesting thing in living history interpretation itself and a difficult thing because [...]

TL: Absolutely.

LH: That's really the goal of - I feel just [from] my own memories of the park - I mean, authenticity is the goal of course and it's a good goal to have, but there's also this kind of *myth* of the lengths people will sometimes go to be [pause] as authentic as possible. So I think that's [a] definitely interesting kind of culture within the park.

TL: And sometimes - I think it's valuable, cause it does lead to that, but sometimes it can be a little bit naive too, right and sometimes, we make sacrifices against accuracy to tell a story, just like I was saying, we have a nursing sister and a veteran, which implies a ratio that didn't exist, that's an inaccuracy, but it allows us to tell a story [...]. Or even the fact that [...] some people don't even think about is why is that soldier still in his uniform, why is the nursing sister still in their uniform? If it's the twenties, you're out of the army, you've got to keep your uniform, but you wouldn't wear it around ... to the corner store. [...] Finding a place for that narrative, is very interesting, it's not accurate all the time [...] you can make excuses as to why you're wearing the uniform I think, but again, we just found that visitors did not respond to a non-costumed veteran, it didn't have that impact for them, and so [...] we're inaccurate or inauthentic to put somebody in a uniform, because to the visitor that's the authentic experience, is speaking with the uniformed soldier.

Museums, such as FEP, do put a huge amount of effort into historical research and the detailed crafting of narratives and performances. This reflects, in part, their respect of the past and attempts to re-present it in an informed manner which reflects the complexities of history. However, underlying my own original interpretations of authenticity at FEP was the assumption that living history museums *want to work* towards representing the past as accurately as possible. As my shift in theoretical lenses and later analyses will illustrate, my assumptions obscured the complex negotiations about issues of authenticity/accuracy that those who work or volunteer at museums may engage in, and which was reflected in my interviews.

Shifting Theoretical Lenses

At the suggestion of my supervisors, I shifted my theoretical lenses to try to better understand the complexities of memory and museums when it comes to considerations of authenticity. Though I had read theories discussing issues of authenticity prior to beginning my fieldwork, these frameworks did not stick with me as I

started to analyze my research materials. Instead, my memories of working at FEP had a much stronger impact on my initial analyses. Shifting my theoretical lenses provided me with “a language and vocabulary [to not only] discover the layers under the surface, but [to] rediscover the surface itself and realize [...] that I did not know what [I] did not know” (Madison 2012: 36). This illustrates that movements from fieldwork, to analysis and interpretation, to writing, are never direct nor linear. Rather, such movements require multiple instances of working and re-working. This speaks to the importance of ethnographers returning to, and re-working, our theoretical lenses after the process of fieldwork, and during the writing and re-writing stages, to assist ethnographers in analysing and framing their research. Researchers can therefore learn *more* when the ground beneath them shifts, than when things seem to be on track (Kohn 2010).

There were a few theorists I turned to following my initial analyses of authenticity and how it relates to memory work and museums. First, I re-read scholars on experience and authenticity, in particular to as to how as a form of discourse, *any* claim to absolute authenticity or accuracy communicates the potential for, and existence of absolute objectivity (Jackson 2005; Scott 1991). Subsequently, I found other works that speak of how museums are sites that cultivate a sense of authenticity, either intentionally or unintentionally (Gable and Handler 2007; Henare 2005; Magelssen 2007; Peers 2007). This in turn led me to re-examining museum spaces themselves.

In shifting my theoretical lenses, I came to see just how complex claims to authenticity are in memory work and museums. It became clear as I re-worked my analyses that my research illustrates negotiations of and debates about issues of authenticity and memory in museums are not *just* taking place within scholarly literature, but are happening ‘on the ground’ in the material spaces of museums. Changing my theoretical framework additionally led me to identify how claims to authenticity in relation to memory and museums are bound up with issues of power.

Memory and Authenticity in Museum Spaces: A Later Analysis

In this section I return to my interviews, observations, and memories to critically assess how my understanding of them changed following my shift in theory. This

illustrates how the same research materials can be interpreted *differently* when viewed from different theoretical frameworks. I focus on three broad topics of re-analysis. First, I re-analyze parts of my interviews with Hans, Ryan, and Tom to examine how they discuss or allude to issues of memory and authenticity in their respective museums. This includes addressing how following re-analysis, my interview materials reflected complex thinking about issues of authenticity and ‘realness’ in museum spaces on a daily basis ‘from the ground up’. Second, I turn to how my memories and research encounters at FEP and the literature on living history museums (Magelssen 2007; Peers 2007) illustrate how discussions of selection and complexities of portraying ‘real’ and ‘objective’ history amongst curators and interpreters can contradict the *material spaces* in which they work. Living history museums in particular cultivate claims to authenticity and an ‘aesthetic of objectivity’ when conflating museum experiences with experiencing history. Third, I address how authenticity is related to the politics of the everyday in museum spaces.

Re-analyzing my Interview Materials

There were three specific research encounters that I re-assessed after my shift in theory, as instances that speak to the nature of authenticity of any sort, but specifically that which museums either intentionally or unintentionally cultivate. First, I returned to my second interview with Hans, where he suggests history/memory have particular uses in museums.

HB: Well first of all the official histories never go into significant detail [...] alright [pause] so, it’s a very [longer pause] broad brush view of how the operation occurred and the individual recollections are probably more vivid, more detailed, because they can name names and it was about their group of five or six people, as opposed to what the thousand man Battalion did on this particular operation on this day, so [pause] that’s the big difference between the two, so, is the individual detail.

Upon re-reading this quote, I came to see how it implied within the work of museums memory and history are both about trying to find out exactly what happened (i.e. achieving accuracy). However, Hans also agreed that selection is involved in *both* practices of history and memory. Though he did not express an opinion that the

narratives of wartime derived from the memories of veterans or historians are 'authentic', in other museums claims to authenticity have been made when it comes to how museums use memories of veterans. Such claims have particular implications. In the Smithsonian exhibit *The Last Act*, which depicted the Enola Gay, the aircraft instrumental in the bombing of Hiroshima, the Smithsonian attempted to present a more balanced viewpoint through focusing on the cost of Japanese life and their World War II experiences. Dubin (1999) summarizes how veterans, and the Air Force Association (AFA), a non-profit lobbying group, fought against the exhibit. These groups "embraced the standard narrative of the Good War; [they viewed] its atomic conclusion [as] a merciful end for *both sides*" (Dubin 1999: 192). In this struggle for power over representation in a museum exhibit the concept of authenticity was used as a powerful political tool. Claims to authenticity aided the AFA and veterans in their efforts to have the exhibit remove any doubt that dropping the atomic bombs was necessary. By drawing on the experiences of veterans, versus those of the curators whose entire lives were lived post World War II, the implication of the protestors was that experience definitively creates legitimacy (Dubin 1999: 192). Though histories and memories are always interpretations, and re-tellings of events from a particular perspective for a particular purpose, this assumed relationship between experience and authenticity draws support from a popular and common approach to history and memory that their purposes should be "*to remember things exactly as they were* [... so that] only one perspective is authentic" (Dubin 1999: 193). Similar assumptions about the relationship between experience and legitimacy are also expressed in encounters between veterans and the costumed historical interpreters that represent the World War I soldier at FEP.

RM: There are [some visitors] who have been combat veterans in more recent conflicts [who have interacted with the character of the soldier]. They tend - from what I've *heard* [...in] those instances they are very concerned [with] how *authentically a soldier is portrayed* (emphasis added), they don't - I haven't heard that they've been critical, I've just heard that they are very well informed on how a soldier should be acting.

LH: So you mean in terms of decorum or manners?

RM: Yeah how they conduct themselves and so on, that's of great concern to [veterans] from what I've heard.

Tom discussed with me encounters in which veterans would ‘test’ or ‘quiz’ the character of the returned soldier to make sure the interpreter was knowledgeable about the details of military service in World War I.

TL: [When a veteran visits] that’s a challenge for an interpreter because there’s a big expectation - Edmonton is in a lot of ways a garrison town, a military town, we have the army base up north named Griesbach, and so a large proportion of - or a larger proportion than I think most cities of Edmonton’s population have served in the military, or have relatives who have served in the military so they see that as a sacred trust in a lot of ways, that’s very important to them - it’s very important that you’re not only presenting the narrative correctly, but also that you know your nuts and bolts.

I also re-examined a conversation Ryan and I had in our second interview. I found the discussion illustrative of the desire for authenticity or accuracy within museum spaces that occurs even when many who work at museums, including Ryan and Tom, know selection is always involved and it is impossible to authentically portray the past. However, Ryan suggested a desire to represent history as it is *documented and recorded* – which is in turn conflated with what is *accurate* – is still influential in museum spaces. Both Ryan and Tom touched on the conscious negotiation that takes place at FEP between what is considered authentic versus what is inauthentic. While Tom discussed the inaccurate *ratio* that the presence of one soldier and one nurse on 1920s street suggests, Ryan emphasized the inauthentic presence of *uniforms* the characters of the soldier and the nursing sister wear.

LH: What do you think these two different characters say maybe about the differential experiences of males versus female Edmontonians [during] World War I?

TL: That’s a really good question, and in fact the first thing that I would say is that it’s a misleading statement that we give, in a way, because we want to tell both stories, we have one nursing sister character, and one returned veteran character, whereas historically, I mean [...] I don’t remember the statistics off the top of my head, but obviously hundreds of thousands of Canadian males who served in the First World War, and the nursing sisters, while their service was no less admirable nor worthy of remembrance, I think numbered less than two thousand.

- LH: When we were talking about the pairing of the nurse [and the] soldier, and when talking about the character of the soldier you had made [pause] you had mentioned you felt the soldier had more opportunities currently in comparison to the nurse [...] I'm just curious [...] in what ways the nurse character is limited [...] and maybe why.
- RM: Even the soldier has his limitations too, I don't know what it is, it's just, it feels like [pause] her uniform is even more out of place, and maybe that's just a bias of mine, I don't know, because [pause] we also have a document [pause] which explains that there's really no reason for the soldier to go around wearing his uniform on the streets of Edmonton [pause] and the same probably goes for the nurse, the nurse's uniform seems a little bit stranger than the soldier's for some reason, I can think of reasons why - there is actually a little list of reasons of why one might explain their presence in uniform on a street in the 1920s, but really there's not much.

Ryan's hesitation to have the inaccurate and undocumented presence of a soldier and nursing sister in their respective uniforms has not stopped Fort Edmonton Park from developing and portraying these narratives. Both Tom and Ryan discussed the museum drawing from multiple primary *and* secondary historical sources, including fictional ones such as graphic novels (Interview with Tom Long, December 9, 2011). However, a desire to privilege the documented historical record has certain implications. The documented historical record does not address that histories always created and told from complexly situated perspectives. This is, in fact, a central aspect of the contradictions and tensions of working within any living history museum. For example, this emphasis on documentation communicates a potential reluctance of living history museum staff:

to treat any subject not documented by "reliable sources". This just-the-facts approach to legitimate subjects of interpretation at living history museums leaves out the potential for discourse treating racial oppression, unfair labour practices, and the like [...]. However, with mimetic realism, there is still an insistence on telling only those stories that may be backed up by material, factual, recorded evidence.

(Magelssen 2007: 124)

Negotiating Authenticity and Accuracy

In returning to my interviews with Tom and Ryan, I saw how my original assumptions about authenticity (i.e. that this is a central goal for museums), which I

developed while working at the museum, overshadowed the daily and complex negotiations of issues of authenticity/accuracy that Tom, Ryan, and others consistently engage in at FEP.

TL: So it's not our responsibility to tell the whole story,¹¹ and that's good because absolutely there are a million stories that we're not telling, that we have a chance to tell [pause] that we might want to tell, but in three minutes, can you do justice to that story? That's often the question you have to ask yourself.

Tom and Ryan both also spoke of avoiding particular events or experiences, even if it would be historically accurate to address them.

For example, commemoration of those who died in World War I was almost frenzied in the immediate post-war years throughout Canada. Many Cenotaphs were constructed and funded through efforts from local communities, rather than mandated by government (Shipley 1987; Thomson 1996), and were constructed in cities and towns throughout Canada even before the fighting had ceased. Following World War II these structures were then updated with new names and inscriptions. Though 1920 street at FEP depicts *post-war Edmonton* following World War I, there is no physical structure, such as a Cenotaph, discussing how the dead were commemorated or re-membered in this time period.¹² This absence in part has to do with the potential for visitors to inhabit roles at FEP. Ryan and Tom explained:

TL: Cenotaphs stand as a stark, very stark reminder, and [are] very visually striking, and tells you exactly what your role is, and that's a pertinent

¹¹ There are implications for implying that a *single* historical narrative ('the whole story') can exist. Instead, historical narratives shift (and may contradict each other) when told from variably situated perspectives. Museum discourses, particularly those in living history museums, often assert barriers to understanding the past would be reduced through further research and more available data, rather than addressing how museums are "institutions that construct particular 'histories' informed by specific events, ideologies, and discourses" (Magelssen 2007: 3).

¹² While there is a memorial fountain and garden, located at the very end of 1905 Street before 1920 Street begins, dedicated to the work of the Legion in Alberta and a memorial to soldiers of the First World War (Interview with Tom Long, December 9, 2011), the physical space does not reflect the post-war commemorative practices that would have taken place in Edmonton at this time.

and a pious pilgrim in a lot of ways who is coming to commemorate the war dead.

RM: Yeah, we had talked among [ourselves] about the possibility in the future of, of having a Cenotaph and if that's even appropriate [...] we haven't really answered that question for ourselves yet, we don't know [pause] we don't know what the rules are [pause] around who should have a Cenotaph, and [what's] the appropriate way to treat that and so on [...]. We don't really discuss, or we don't really touch on the dead so often, and it's a very tricky subject [pause] because anytime we tried to talk about death at the park, [...] we can list off statistics and that's frequently how we talk about [pause] the dead, this is how many thousands of dead that Edmonton had in the First World War, but [...] when we get down to trying to *portray* death, that's a very tricky thing, because then you're dealing with people's own emotions, we never know if a visitor walking by [pause] has recently lost someone themselves. [...] A Cenotaph has a *lot* of sort of *lore* attached to it, it implies how you should be feeling when you're around it.

Ryan and Tom's discussion of the absence of a re-creation of a Cenotaph at FEP speaks to the complex negotiations about issues of authenticity that interpreters engage with on a daily basis. In this case, though Cenotaphs would have been a reality of post-war Edmonton, and thus an accurate feature to include on 1920 street, the interpreters recognize that Cenotaphs has particular connotations, which in turn cultivate potential reactions and relationships that interpreters would prefer to avoid.

While re-working segments of my thesis quite late in the writing process, I recalled an interesting debate which took place the summer after I worked at FEP, which also speaks to the daily negotiation of issues of authenticity and accuracy. A series of changes to interpretation were proposed, which FEP staff members reacted against, writing letters and newspaper editorials. They took issue with the proposal that more 'amusement park' elements be incorporated into the museum, in part to increase attendance for those that visit FEP for recreational purposes. My re-collection of their critiques of the proposed plans was that such critiques hinged on the use of anachronistic technologies to re-present the past. At the same time, staff welcomed the completion of the Capitol Theatre on 1920 street, which utilized and discussed the technology of film. Therefore, in negotiating how to re-present the past, those working at

FEP did not take issue with the use of technology to aid in interpretation, but rather *how* to incorporate technology and to tell *which* narratives (in this case, modern technology was used in what interpreters deemed a *historically accurate* way, to represent the development of film in the 1920s).

Alternatively, in shifting my theoretical perspective and returning to my research materials, the framework of ‘authenticity’ vs. ‘sincerity’ (Jackson 2005) provided a productive lens through which to understand how costumed historical interpreters, such as Tom and Ryan, negotiate authenticity in their work. In my original approach to authenticity (as evident in my interviews with Tom and Ryan), and how it works within museum spaces, I assumed attempts for ‘realistic’ and ‘objective’ re-presentations of history were illustrative of attempted authenticity. Instead, when museums, such as FEP, involve performances, perhaps attempts to accurately re-present ‘real’ history can be understood as ‘sincere’ (a term which is bound up with authenticity yet also offers ‘something extra’) (Jackson 2005). In this sense, when interpreters carefully research the documented historical record when preparing to engage with visitors (other subjects), perform a program on a particular historical events or theme, and enact historical personas (real or imagining ‘almost’ real people) they are trying to *sincerely* re-present the past in that

sincerity [...] sets up a different relationship entirely [than authenticity]. A mere object could never be sincere, even if it is authentic. [...] Instead, sincerity presumes a liaison *between subjects* – not some external adjudicator and a lifeless scroll. Questions of sincerity imply social interlocutors who presume one another’s humanity, interiority, and subjectivity. (Jackson 2005: 15)

When Museum Experiences = Experiencing History

Though curators and interpreters (such as Tom and Ryan) acknowledge the processes of selection and the inability to re-present the past ‘the way it was’, those who visit living history museums may have a different understanding of the experiences they have in these spaces. Furthermore, while curators and interpreters actively engage in processes of selection, the material spaces of museums do not always communicate that these processes are taking place. While selection always occurs, *what* has been selected and *why* it has been selected, at the exclusion of another narrative or

perspective, is very rarely, if ever communicated in the signage, literature, or performances at a living history museum (Magelssen 2007). The way that time and history are treated within these spaces:

perpetuates the notion in visitors' minds that accuracy is, indeed, possible [...]. The scientific contract, monumentation, and the invention of tradition are all procedures that imply that time can be retraced along a precise and homogenous continuum to a moment in the past and that that moment can be reconstructed to accurately represent the physicality and social relationships that define the moment as part of a narrative of history. (Magelssen 2007: 45)

Therefore, at living history museums in particular, visitors come to believe that when experiencing a day at a museum amongst historical buildings, artifacts, and costumed historical interpreters, that they are in some sense *experiencing history*.

FEP's website states to visitors that "Fort Edmonton Park is a place where time has stopped and is waiting for you to experience life *as it was* through four historical periods between 1846 and 1929" (Fort Edmonton Park Website; Homepage 2012, emphasis added). The idea that a museum is a place where one can *experience* history or memory has particular consequences. It cultivates an environment in which visitors can and do assume that their experience visiting the museum – which is an experience based upon the museum's selection of certain characters, as interpreted through situated individuals – accurately mimics *the past as it was*. "Live displays, whether recreations of daily activities or staged as formal performances, also create the illusion that the activities one watches are being done rather than represented, a practice that creates the illusion of authenticity or realness" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1991: 415).

As Gable and Handler argue following their ethnographic study of Colonial Williamsburg, the creation of museums which aim or claim to re-create history as it was "collapses the distance between history and personal experience [so that visitors come to conflate the experiences they have within a living history museum] *with historical experience or historical knowledge*" (Gable and Handler 2007: 53). This does not mean that visitors literally "believe they are seeing the real *past* or that they are time-traveling to a different temporal space, [but] it is easy, without available conditions for

unmasking, to simply assume that [what they see] is real, trustworthy history” (Magelssen 2007: 135).

While conversations between visitors and interpreters can and do provide interpreters the opportunity to explain to visitors how certain visual features of the museum do not accurately convey aspects of Edmonton at that particular time period, not all visitors will stop to converse with interpreters. There are two compelling examples from my interview with Tom, in which he described how visitors conflated something they saw at Fort Edmonton Park with their understanding of the past.

TL: I think the vast majority of visitors understand that we’re telling a part of a story and not the whole story.

LH: Right.

TL: But I mean, that’s a very hard thing to police, the implication of what we do, is so difficult, even just I mean, I know in the interview it’s not going to come off, but looking at the 1920s street, as you know, the implication to the visitor is, this is what 1920s Edmonton was like. Wooden sidewalks, dirt roads, big empty fields, and it’s *not*, Edmonton was a very metropolitan place in the 1920s, but we don’t have the money or the resources to show that adequately, and also we’re not done [pause] - but it’s easy for me to tell you that, but how many visitors come through 1920s street [sound of a horse in the background] see what they see, take that, the implied message as *the* message, and then go on their way without having talked to me about what we can and can’t portray [...] so that’s a huge thing that I think all museums, but especially living history museums like Fort Edmonton run into.

Another instance of visitors making incorrect visual associations between what they saw with a historical reality was evident when Tom recounted how a visitor assumed that the World War I veteran was a Ukrainian policeman. A visitor made this association because the interpreter was in a uniform and standing outside of the Ukrainian bookstore on 1920 street. Such assumptions based on visual and spatial cues alone within a living history museum can have detrimental consequences for reinforcing stereotypes about the relationships between groups in the past. For example, Peers writes of how the size, frequency, and relative layout of European and Aboriginal buildings within historic reconstructions imply particular narratives which don’t reflect available written or oral historical documentation.

The relative size and complexity of different parts of historic reconstructions, and their relation to one another, imply certain messages, and undermine others [...]. By allowing the visitor to believe that the reconstruction is an exact replica of what the site really looked like, sites give visitors free rein to interpret what they actually see [...]. While interpreters, orientation displays, and brochures do their best to communicate the actual size of Native and European populations, and the nature of the relationships between them, it is hard to contradict the compelling messages suggested by the physical elements of reconstructions. (Peers 2007: 95, 97-98)

Similar visual associations are also made possible at FEP in its re-presentation of Aboriginal history. The Cree camp is an important interpretive space for the 1846 Fort Edmonton reconstruction. However, while crucial narratives concerning Aboriginal history are also discussed in other areas of the museum particularly in the pre-settlement 1885 era, the presence of Aboriginals is not encountered *visually* after the visitor leaves the Fur Trade area.¹³ A potential consequence of this is that if visitors are equating what they see and *experience* at FEP as experiencing the past as *it was*, if they only see Aboriginal peoples in the 1846 era they might assume these groups are part of a 'distant' past, without recognizing the Aboriginal presence *throughout* Edmonton's history and its present. This can happen even if FEP continues its efforts to emphasize Aboriginals and their histories within the *narrative* performances and discussions with visitors. Visual cues and absences continue to influence how visitors experience museums such as Fort Edmonton Park.

By not making the processes that go into the re-constructions within museums visible, an "aesthetic of objectivity" (Denzin 2003: 73) is created. In conveying that they are re-presenting and portraying *real* people, places, and events through rigorous research, without addressing *how and why* those people, places, or events were

¹³ However, I do recall hearing that an Aboriginal interpreter who worked in the 1846 Fort Edmonton reconstruction did then move into the 1905 era the next summer after I worked there. In 2011, the character of Alex Decoteau, Canada's First Aboriginal Police Officer, was incorporated into the 1905 narrative (Fort Edmonton Park Website Blog 2012: July 19, 2012 entry). Based on my memories of working at the museum, Aboriginal histories are not a focal narrative on 1905 or 1920 street, though this does not prevent interpreters from researching such topics in detail and bringing them up with visitors in face-to-face conversations. My point is that the sustained presence of Aboriginal groups throughout Edmonton's history often remains quite *visually absent* within the museum even though it may be *narrated* in various places, such as through conversations with visitors, or on the museum's website.

selected and interpreted, FEP and other museums imply objectivity. This process in museums reflects the same method and aesthetic qualities of Anna Deavere Smith's performances. In her work *Fires in the Mirror* (1993), Smith interviews *real* people, and then takes these interviews and adapts them into segments where she performs various interviewees' *real* words. She does not address her own decisions and work that went into the final product. As a result, the performance appears objective, because it relies "almost exclusively upon others to fabricate a performance *out of the real rather than the fictional*" (Lyons and Lyons 1994: 46). Just as museums base their narratives on *real* people and *real* events, ethnographer really go out into the field and talk with real people. Therefore, if ethnographers do not discuss and write about how they take the 'real' and interpret, contextualize, extend, select, or re-create these real experiences and peoples, their ethnographic works will convey an 'aesthetic of objectivity'.

Authenticity and the Politics of the Everyday in Museums

My early assumptions that 'authenticity' is even possible in museum spaces such as Fort Edmonton Park therefore had significant implications. Such assumptions imply that objectivity and the 'real' are possible. During my 'shift in theoretical lenses' I began to understand that claims to authenticity involve the politics of the everyday. "Authenticity is not about factuality or reality. It is about authority" (Crew and Sims 1991: 163). Institutions such as museums have the authority to select which stories to tell and how to tell them. Accuracy and authenticity are not ontological categories in and of themselves. Instead, these concepts are constituted through socially constructed relationships (Magelssen 2007). As institutions, museums, through conveying to visitors that their practices are rigorous, authoritative, 'accurate', and depict 'history as it was', establish authenticity. This relationship also works the other way as well – visitors must put stock in a museum's reputation and capacity for authenticity and accuracy. If this is the case, visitors are far less likely to question what is being re-presented within a museum, though this does not eliminate their capacity for agency.

At the same time, what is re-presented within museums is tied up with considerations of logistics, management needs, and budgets and the possibilities or limitations these various factors create (Peers 2007). The World War I programs and narratives were developed and expanded after FEP was awarded a significant grant to

initiate this project. I also recall discussions from my time working at FEP as to what the museum staff would like to include in their interpretive narratives if they had the budget or resources to do so. One example was the desire to build a reconstruction of a Chinese business, in order to represent in more detail the multicultural nature of Edmonton in the 1920s, a narrative which is currently portrayed through the presence of the original Al Rashid Mosque and a Ukrainian bookstore on 1920 street. Therefore, “features that scholars interpret as representing ideological positions might actually be the result of making do with what is available” (Price 2007: 106). However, despite limited resources, scholars and museums cannot ignore that museums are still capable of selecting what they will include, at the sake of other narratives, when utilizing the resources they have. Prioritizing which narratives to interpret with available resources and funding communicates which narratives museum curators feel are important in a portrayal of the past. For example, the most recent addition to 1920 street was not a Chinese business, but the Capitol Theatre. As Tom emphasized in our interview however, those who work at FEP are still not done building upon the narratives and buildings on 1920 street. Furthermore, the narratives within museums are never static, but instead are constantly being developed, re-worked, and expanded.

Conclusion

The association between memory and museums with truth or accuracy mirrors the claims to scientific accuracy that anthropologists previously made through the practice of ethnography: ‘I was there, I know what happened’. Hastrup (2004), Scott (1991), and Jackson (2005), instead emphasize that we cannot use direct experience, whether that experience is created through memory, ethnography, or visiting a museum, as an unmediated form of evidence from which we can generate knowledge. Experience must be situated. It is not foundational, since “experiences must themselves be explained because in a sense they are already imbued with interpretation, they are neither neutral nor prediscursive” (Hastrup 2004: 467).

In this chapter I began by returning to my fieldnotes, interviews, and early analyses, which reflected my original approach to the interactions between memory, authenticity, and museums. My experience working at FEP and the impressions I developed during this time led me to convey in my interviews with Tom and Ryan and in

my analysis that an authentic/accurate view of the past was possible to create through living history interpretation. My memories of my impressions working at FEP dominated how I understood my research materials, even when Tom and Ryan expressed they continue to question and negotiate the processes of selection, and issues of authenticity, that they encounter in their work. When interviewing Maurice and Hans, I also originally thought their narratives and memories as veterans were more authentic than Ryan's and Tom's experiences, rather than acknowledging their memories were just grounded in different experiences (military service vs. living history interpretation). After outlining my early analysis of my research materials, thus once again opening up my own assumptions, interpretations, and memories to analytical scrutiny (Gallinat 2010), I discussed my 'shift in theory' which provided me with a framework through which to re-interpret my research from a different angle. I then explored four issues that emerged when re-analyzing my research materials. First I examined how – in my interview with Hans – museums use history and memory to find out what happened in the past, and how – in my interviews with Ryan and Tom – there was a hesitation within living history museums to move outside of the *documented* historical record. Second, I examined how my interview materials also illustrate the complex and ongoing negotiation of accuracy and authenticity within museums from 'the ground up'. This suggests such issues are a daily concern within museums spaces, and not just a scholarly or academic concern. Third, I asserted that, despite such negotiations, the material spaces of museums can contradict the nuanced way in which curators and interpreters understand and discuss authenticity/accuracy. Within FEP, visitors might conflate what they experience at the museum as experiencing history the way it was. Without making processes of selection visible, museums create an 'aesthetic of objectivity' in that they do re-present real people and real events, but without addressing the conditions and processes within which these re-presentations are created. Finally, I discussed how when museums either intentionally or unintentionally claim to provide an authentic representation of the past, these efforts are bound up with issues of power and the politics of the everyday, since museums assert they have the authority to represent the past, and in particular ways, through rigorous historical research and attending to the 'real'.

Chapter 6.

The Body, Performance, and Memory

I now turn to an examination of performance and how it lends itself to memory work and the representation of the World Wars in the two museums where I located my research. Specifically, the way I approached and defined 'performance' in my research was two-fold. First, I use the term 'performance' to refer to intentionally theatrical encounters. This type of performance is central to the work at Fort Edmonton Park, where costumed historical interpreters perform and enact either real or fictional composite historical personas. These types of performances can be semi-scripted, such as those in a set program with a specific historical topic or theme. However, these performances are also improvisational. Second, I use the concept of 'performance' more broadly, as a framework through which to understand memory work. Just as 'performance' requires "being there" (Taylor 2003), and thus necessitates the presence of the body, memory work also engages the body. This illustrates memory does not just involve *cognitive* processes, but rather blurs the boundaries between the mind and body dualism that many scholars have already critiqued (Clough 2007, 2008; Massumi 2002).

Attention to memory work, the body, and performance illustrates that when analysing museums, scholars must address the experiences of those who work and volunteer in museums, since this work and their performances and presence offer different potentials than artifacts and exhibits alone. While artifacts and exhibits stay static, those who interpret or come in contact with such objects shift. Therefore, the meaning of artifacts or exhibits or their significance can change (Taylor 2003). During performances, "people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by "being there," being a part of the transmission. As opposed to [...] somewhat stable objects [...] the actions that are in [performances] do not remain the same" (Taylor 2003: 20).

In this Chapter I first explore how memory work involves the body, including how memories engage and draw upon the senses. Next, I examine the unique potentials of performance at FEP, the LERMM, and beyond. These potentials include the impact that the presence and co-presence of bodies can have on those engaged in performances and the ability for dialogue from the 'ground up'.

Memory and the Body

My interview with Tom touched on how visitors react to the sensory aspects of FEP and that these various sensations can be strong triggers for memories of their childhood or of family members. The sensory aspects of FEP are also what prevail in my own memories of working at the museum.

In summer, [I re-member] interpretation, costume, train station, hat, sticky, craning neck up to look up from under [my...] floppy hat, sore feet from high heeled character shoes, sounds from [the] midway, extremely loud train, sound of shoes on boardwalk, mouth dry from [speaking] to visitors, [...] so many people and noises, streetcar rumbling [...]. In winter, [I re-member] slipping on sidewalks, pioneer dress, silence, always moving, driving on site, hauling supplies, making cookie dough, smell of old houses, chopping firewood and kindling [...] in the snow, energetic children, [...] birthday parties, ropes [to protect certain exhibits], nervous at night in the quiet, still dark, mice are in the Fort, cold, crunch of snow, smell and heat of the wood burning stove, pride over a well lit fire (panic when not), trying to melt wax, never sitting [...] dirty fingernails from soot, greasing the stove [with lard], crayons, radio [crackle].

(Fieldnotes: November 25, 2011)

I wrote this passage in my fieldnotes as a freewriting exercise before returning to Fort Edmonton Park to begin my research in November 2011, which was the first time I had returned to FEP since working there from 2009-2010. During this exercise I jotted down the first memories that came to mind. While the memories are fragmented, what I find interesting re-reading this segment is that the emphasis was not on narrative memories. I was not recalling specific days, events, or interpretive experiences. Instead, what is central are my sensory memories of working at FEP for just under a year: the smells, sensations, feelings, noises, and atmosphere.

In my interviews at Fort Edmonton Park and the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum it became apparent that the senses are strong memory triggers. The relevance of paying attention to the senses and memory is that it further emphasizes the impact of embodied memory and illustrates that the body is involved in processes of memory work. This suggests we cannot understand memory work as only a cognitive experience. Many personal memories at FEP are prompted or re-emerge in response to the complex sensory environment visitors encounter. Visitors who smell the various wood burning stoves throughout the museum frequently remark that they grew up in a house with one like it, or re-member the smell from their grandparents' houses.

LH: Do you have a memory of [an] interaction with a visitor when you were doing first person historical interpretation where you [saw...] memories emerge from being in certain spaces, or seeing certain artifacts?

TL: One of the main things was I played the Mountie in the settlement period, the eighteen eighties for a long time, and I used to do an activity where I would take a bath, in a sit down bathtub. I would be fully clothed in long underwear to preserve my modesty [LH laughs] but I was surprised by the number of people who remembered sit down bathtubs, or as they called them, Sits Baths, which is actually a product name rather than a description, but they would remember their fathers or their grandfathers or their uncles taking baths in this sit down bath tub, and that was a really neat experience. [...] [Also] log cabins, the smell of wood burning stoves. It's really incredible I think [pause] the number of Albertans who *claim* or have grown up in log cabins with wood burning stoves, as is my impression from dealing with them for years as an interpreter, where every visitor [who] comes in is like "oh, I grew up in a house just like that!"

Tom implies when using the word '*claim*' that perhaps not everyone who expresses that they have a memory associated with the smell of a wood burning stove actually grew up in a house with that type of stove. What is interesting about these claims to memory, as the concept of mosaic memory illustrates (Fox 2010), is that potentially multiple or competing sources of memory may have led these visitors to *feel* as though they have a memory associated with the scent of a wood burning stove. Perhaps the prevalence of this memory of wood burning stoves speaks to the impact of nostalgia for the past, even a past one never experienced, on how people re-member within museums, particularly living history museums, that attempt to create multi-sensory environments. Or maybe these memories *are* extremely prevalent, and such memories are only re-membered in

the presence of certain sensory prompts. The space of a museum, which creates an interpretation of the past may facilitate recalling certain memories that are otherwise 'forgotten'. "Meanings and significance of the past are incomplete, tentative, and revisable according to contingencies of our present life circumstances, the present from which we narrate" (Ellis and Bochner 2000: 754).

Realizing that the body serves as a mediator of memory became clear during my second interview with Maurice, when I made a point to ask him about his memories of what he tasted, smelled, or heard during his wartime experiences. Such memories might be difficult to express verbally, though discourse and language are how we make sense of all experiences, including embodied ones. Therefore, "it is more productive to treat discourse as part and parcel of processes of embodiment and knowledge and sense-making, rather than to dichotomize bodily sensorial knowledge and linguistic expression" (Porcello et al. 2010: 60-61). When asking Maurice about his sensory memories, he made a strong connection between a particular smell and a particular memory. He emphasized that he *still* experiences the same memory with the same intensity to this day when he encounters the specific smell linked to it.

LH: Yeah [pause] the other thing in terms of [...] thinking about [pause] memory, I was wondering as well whether [pause] of course you have memories of what happened, but maybe [pause] whether you also have memories of your time overseas of different senses, so ... do you remember what types of things you ate, or what types of things you heard, or what types of things you smelled.

MW: [pause] Well speaking of smell, when we landed in Sicily [pause] the first thing I smelt was [pause] it smelt like liquorice [...] and, about the same time that I [longer pause] had the sensation of this liquorice smell, there was a dead German on the path [pause] [to this day whenever I smell liquorice the image enters my mind of that dead soldier, as if it were a picture in my mind].¹⁴

He then went on to describe how after returning home he experienced strong bodily reactions to loud noises.

¹⁴ The last section of this quote is paraphrased from Maurice's comments during a phone conversation we had in October 2012 where he corrected the original transcription of our interview I was quoting.

LH: Right [pause] and is there a certain sound that stands out to you when you think back on your time overseas?

MW: [Longer pause] Well [pause] still, if all of a sudden there's a loud noise I'll [react] to that and I'll [pause] sometimes feel like I want to go down to the ground [...] and I used to do that after I [came] back from overseas [pause] in Edmonton here if a street car suddenly [short laugh] [came] round the corner I'd go down [...] cause [it would] sound like a heavy artillery shell coming in you know [makes the sound effect of what it would have sounded like].

LH: Right.

MW: [pause] But I'm, I'll still jump if I hear a loud bang [pause] I'll jump, yeah.

As the interaction of the senses and memory at FEP and my interviews with Maurice illustrates, a focus on a cognitive or narrative understanding of memory alone ignores the role that the body has in mediating, communicating, and re-experiencing memories, and indeed all lived experiences and sensations. Additionally, as I observed in my second interview with Maurice, not all re-membered experiences or sensations can be verbalized. He asserts there are particular experiences and memories he can never explain to others.

MW: But there's [pause] there's no way [longer pause] there's absolutely no way that I could, or anybody else could convince you [pause] how we felt, [...] I believe that's impossible.

LH: And why do you think that?

MW: [Pause] You [...] *had* to have been there in order to [pause] to get that feeling [pause] cause fear - and it's difficult to explain what fear is - like the children, I ask them if they ever had a nightmare [pause] and if they have, I say you know [pause] when you wake up, that nightmare, you know the fear is gone [pause] when we're in battle [pause] that nightmare is constant, it doesn't leave [...] until you're [pause] out of action [...] out of the zone where it's taking place.

For Maurice, this inability to verbalize or share particular experiences happens when he speaks about the emotion, or more specifically, the *embodied sensation* of fear of finding oneself alone during war that he can still re-member.

MW: It's hard to explain I know from my own personal feeling [pause] many many times - maybe I said this before [pause] you feel like your

heart's [going to] explode [from fear] [...] you are so afraid, and there's nothing you can do about it, especially if you're left by yourself [pause] that is the worst thing, you always want - you feel like you should be close to your buddy, or another soldier, but when you're left alone, man [voice gets quieter] that's a terrible terrible feeling - I have personally had that experience [pause] and I said, mother please help me [longer pause]...out loud, I wanted to make sure that she heard me, excuse me for [he has been tearing up, gives a short laugh], that's the way you feel.

However, there was much more complexity to this segment of our interview, which is easy to lose when transcribing nuanced audio recordings into written text. There were key physical gestures which accompanied the narration of his memory. While attempting to describe the indescribable, the quality and tone of Maurice's voice changed. He became quieter, his eyes filled with tears, and he motioned to the area where the throat meets the chest to point out the *physical location* where that sensation rises up and then resides. At the level of the body, during our interview, these gestures suggested, though could not fully communicate to me, the intensity of his visceral recollection of that fear that he still experiences when re-remembering those events today. Therefore, while embodied memories may be impossible or difficult to verbalize, they can still be communicated through particular gestures, movements, or reactions.

At the same time, these sections of my interviews with Maurice illustrate the limitations of ethnography and an ethnographer. There are aspects of life and experience that we simply do not have access to. For example, though Maurice's description of how he re-members the feeling of being left by himself suggested to me that what he felt was fear in those situations, I cannot actually know how he experiences that emotion. "Emotions are more elusive [...] they are personal and biographical as well as shared; they are of the moment but reference the past; they are "in here" as well as "out there." Mostly, they fall outside the ethnographic frame" (Beatty 2010: 437). Narratives also have their own limitations for expressing empirical experiences (Shuman 2006). Just like mosaic memory illustrates memories do not develop in a direct manner from experience (Fox 2010), ethnographers can question to what degree a representation is "a sufficient, adequate, accurate, or appropriate rendering of

experience” (Shuman 2006: 149).¹⁵ Or perhaps, when Maurice speaks of how he cannot convey what he experienced during World War II he actually means that I, as the listener, am not capable of understanding his memories without a shared experience. His view therefore supports the idea that “empathy requires either reframing experiences to find common ground or accepting the possibility that *some experiences cannot be shared*” (Shuman 2006: 152, emphasis added).

Unique Potentials of Performance

I now outline the various ways in which performance takes place at FEP and the LERMM and beyond. Two of the key potentials of performance, which sets them apart from the artifacts and exhibits alone that make up museums include the effect of presence and co-presence on those engaged in performances, and the possibility for dialogue and critique ‘from the ground up’.

Performance at Fort Edmonton Park

The bulk of historical interpretation at FEP occurs through the creation and enactment of costumed historical personas. Some, though not all, of the interpreters that work at FEP, study drama at the University of Alberta, or have a theatrical background. Ryan, who studied theatre, focused on the character he was portraying in his work as a costumed historical interpreter. I return to his description of his work as a costumed historical interpreter at FEP:

RM: [When interpreting] I'd like to play the character, I like to be the character, that was the way I liked to interact with people was to be the person rather than just a representation of them [...] sometimes I'd like to stay in that character and give [visitors] a sense, at least based on my interpretation, of what [my character's] life was [...]. I never deluded myself far enough to believe that I really had it down one hundred percent [LH laughs briefly].

¹⁵ Though in response to Shuman’s work I would caution that the ‘accuracy’ of narratives may not matter for those who tell them. Instead, “what matters most about memory [or narratives] may not be primarily the content or accuracy of something remembered [or told] but, rather, how memory [or narratives function] to stabilize identity, by laying claims to authenticity and truth” (Burk 2010: 103).

Costumed historical interpreters at FEP can choose from two styles of interpretation: first-person and third-person.

First-person interpreters speak in the first-person, present indicative tense when informing visitors about the lives and times they are portraying in the museum's environment [...whereas] third-person interpreters, often in historic costume also interpret the lives of the people and the museum displays, but in a third-person, preterit verb tense.

(Magelssen 2007: xxii)

A first-person interpreter on 1920 street at FEP would therefore say – “the year is 1920 and this is what I am experiencing today”. The third-person voice instead speaks from the present - “the year is 1920 and the people who lived here would have experienced this”. Interpreters at Fort Edmonton Park often choose to engage in first-person interpretation, though it is a flexible form in which they are allowed to switch into third-person.¹⁶ This flexibility allows interpreters to answer visitors' questions that are anachronistic to the time period they are representing. It also enables comparisons between the present and the past more easily. Many interpreters who enact first-person interpretation try to not break character, and (often playfully) act confused when a visitor asks them a question outside of their time period. For example, in the Fort and on 1885 street, I recall some interpreters pretending to be alarmed or confused if a plane flew over the open-air museum. When practicing first-person interpretation, interpreters construct a historical persona. In some situations, interpreters will portray a person who existed, but in many cases they will create a 'composite' character using various sources of historical data and their imagination. This practice is not just an individual one, but is rather a *social* process. Interpreters will develop fictional familial 'relationships' between their characters and the characters of their co-workers. This is often done in a tongue-in-cheek, playful manner. Interpreters will act as if they are siblings, a parent and child, or a husband and wife. Since so many interpreters return to the museum summer after summer, their composite character develop a type of complex 'history' of their own, with

¹⁶ There are some living history museums where interpretive staff must stay in character at all times. Plymouth Plantation is an example of this style of interpretation, which is “known for the quality of its first-person interpreters and their rock-solid characters that cannot be cracked by even the peskiest of “Pilgrim-Baiters” (described [...] as those gadflies who make a game out of trying to poke holes in the interpreters' facades)” (Magelssen 2007: xxii).

interpreters re-using and further building upon these historical personas over time. Finally, because much historical interpretation takes place during informal discussions with visitors, improvisation is an invaluable tool for interpreters as they work to answer the variable and complex questions visitors have.

Using performance as the primary mode of communication and transmission of knowledge at FEP allows for the bodily experiences of the interpreters to add to their narrative interpretation. By this, I mean that the body, as a site of knowledge, memory, and experience, can be used to communicate particular bodily and sensory experiences that cannot be done in the same way through artifacts, exhibits, or interpretive panels often found in museums. One compelling example of this from the World War I programming at Fort Edmonton Park, which happened the summer I worked at the museum, was the wounded soldier interpretation. This was not a scripted program, but involved the interpreter representing the World War I veteran bandaging his eyes for the day. The nursing sister interpreter would then lead him around the museum, assisting him with different tasks. This had the potential to be a visually striking sight to some visitors who would then stop to ask the interpreters questions about what they were portraying.¹⁷ It could lead to conversations about various topics, including the work and experiences of nursing sisters overseas, the experience of wounded soldiers who returned home and had difficulties integrating back into society and the workforce, and the work of veterans associations to get more government funding for wounded veterans and their families. What was compelling to me about this practice was that the interpreter representing the veteran attempted to experience what it would have *felt like* to be deprived of one of his senses. This in turn added to a different quality of interpretation. While he of course could take his bandages off at the end of the work day, rather than talking about what wounded soldiers went through when returning home injured after the war, as gleaned from historical sources, the interpreter may have come

¹⁷ It is compelling to note however that while I re-remembered the 'blind soldier' interpretive narrative as a potentially powerful experience for visitors, when returning to my first interview with Ryan, he had pointed out that "where we have the fellow wearing the bandage over his eyes and he can't see, it's sort of treated as [...] a maudlin thing where [visitors] don't quite empathize, they think – it almost seems kind of silly to them [...] they probably know that the person portraying the blind person isn't actually blind [...] which maybe affects them a bit [...] and their willingness to buy into that" (Interview with Ryan Mullen, November 24, 2011).

to empathize¹⁸ to some (albeit limited) degree with the *physical* and *bodily* experience of that type of injury, which he could then highlight in his interpretation.

The presence of the body is particularly powerful when attempting to better understand the unique possibilities that performance offers within Fort Edmonton Park to its interpreters and the daily work they engage in during the summer months. Interpreters may choose to attempt to “embody’ their characters and not simply present them as cultural artifacts on display” (Magelssen 2007: 89). Ryan shared with me his approach to enacting his historical persona. In one instance, he used specific embodied actions to try to understand what historical individuals would have also experienced. It is important to note that this was an experiment that he told to me with humour as he recalled his interpretive choices and realized that they were not quite as effective as he thought they were at the time.

RM: I wanted to give the sense of being [starts laughing] a Hudson’s Bay Laborer by constantly running demonstration programs throughout the whole day, running myself ragged [...] [LH laughs], to the point of feeling like I was really being put to toil [...]. I don’t think anybody but me got the sense of that, so I don’t think that came off to the visitors, so it only - I knew what it felt like, and that was maybe important for me as a learner.

The body is used as a tool in other ways in the interpretation that takes place as FEP. Costumed historical interpreters will modify the way they carry themselves to suit the time period they are representing. For example, I noticed during my summer working at FEP that the interpreter representing the soldier paid particular attention to how he moved and carried himself when in his soldier’s uniform. Additionally, as Ryan discussed, the veterans who have visited the museum and interacted with the interpreter representing the soldier have been concerned with the decorum of the interpreter, which included an attention to how the interpreter carries himself. However, while the body of the interpreter can be used in a positive way as another tool of ‘communication’ for re-

¹⁸ I use this phrase cautiously, recognizing Maurice’s assertion that there are particular experiences that those who did not have them cannot understand, and the possibility that “making meaning out of other people’s stories can produce sentimentality, a misalignment in which an emotional response becomes a substitute for understanding others” (Shuman 2006: 152).

presenting historical information and experiences, living history interpretation can also have a negative impact on the body. I recall discussions with co-workers who expressed that when working in historical costume, they could be treated disrespectfully. At times visitors would treat women in period costume in a different way than the male interpreters. While visitors who did this did so in a joking manner, and justified their actions under the guise of 'playing along' and being 'historically accurate' for a time period where women were not considered equal to men, such encounters could be very emotionally draining and challenging for costumed historical interpreters.

Beyond those in one-on-one interactions with visitors, performances also takes place at FEP through a number of partially scripted programs. To illustrate, I will mention three. The first is a performance-based program dealing with the apprehensions within Canada following World War I about soldiers returning home as communist supporters. This program is entitled the *Red Menace*, which reflects the term given to post-World War I communist supporters. The second is *War Debt*, a program dealing with "war reparation, and the demand that some soldiers had that the government should be doing [...] more to help them out" (Interview with Ryan Mullen, November 24 2011).

A third program entitled *Over the Top* was introduced to the museum in the last few years. It is a type of 'second-person' interpretive event "in which the *visitors* pretend to be part of the past [...] [the emergence of which is related to] museums' recognition that visitors desire higher levels of participation in the historic environment than mere spectatorship" (Magelssen 2007: 138). As I re-member this program, it was one which always enthralled children with its interactive and hands-on focus.

TL: Kids learn a trench drill, and then actually [using mini golf clubs as fake guns charge] across an empty field [...] they're doing a trench raid into an enemy trench, and whenever [the soldier] claps his hands, if they don't fall to the ground fast enough [...] then the stretcher or nurse has to come out and bring him back to the hospital [where they are given a candy as 'morphine'.] [...]. It's this amazing stop, go tag play-time thing, which encapsulates this amazing experience and visitors stay, they stay and talk about it, and it has so many great messages because at the end, he can line them up and [pause] three quarters of them will have fallen to that machine gun in No Man's Land, and had to go back and leave [...] and the [soldier] can relate that to the actual

experience of casualty rates and what it was like ... to face the machine gun, and how many people were injured out of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Other types of second-person interpretation allow visitors to engage in hands-on activities “such as weaving, cooking, or musket loading [so that they] can imagine that they are interpreting the past through physical means [...]. Recently some museums have begun to give visitors even more of a *character role in second-person programming*” (Magelssen 2007: xxiv, emphasis added). Another World War I program at FEP that provides the visitor with a clear character role is one where visitors are invited to sign demobilization papers as though they are soldiers that served in World War I. This program can prompt discussions between interpreters and visitors about the process of demobilization, and the often difficult experiences of soldiers returning from the war as they attempted to readjust to life at home.

As these second-person interpretative experiences illustrate, costumed historical interpreters are not the only ones involved in the performances that take place at FEP. Visitors come to ‘play along’ and can take up numerous ‘roles’ throughout their day at the museum. Visitors within living history museums are therefore audiences but also performers (Magelssen 2007; Peers 2007). My interview with Tom illustrated that performances at FEP are designed in a way so that they are not one-sided processes.

TL: [...] If you want visitors come to a point, or to feel comfortable interacting, you have to create a sidewalk to the place where you want them to interact [pause] and that is both literally and metaphorically, you have to create pathways and create structures where a visitor understands their role [...] and so creating [the costumes of the soldier and the nursing sister] made it immediately apparent that these were their roles, and now it's just a case of giving the visitor a role in how to interact with these people [...] so it's important for us to provide our visitors with a role and a way of interacting with an interpreter that they understand [...] but really [pause] the park is based around sort of one-on-one, relaxed often informal conversation.

The layout of FEP to some degree shapes visitors' conduct and movement through the space, since at the entrance of the museum they are encouraged to take the steam train from the front entrance of the park to the 1846 era and then walk forwards through different historical periods. The implication with this practice is that the visitor

feels she is walking 'forwards through time'. This "organized walking" (Bennett 1995: 6) asserts the linear progression of time from less developed to more developed environments, presumably reaching the pinnacle of development in our present day society. However, I saw many people who did not follow this recommended walking path. Furthermore, many visitors to FEP do not go to the museum to learn about history, but rather use it as a recreational space. They also may choose not to engage with interpreters, but instead focus on the artifacts, buildings, and interpretive signage. Ryan mentioned that many visitors are too shy to engage with costumed historical interpreters, and indicated "even I'm that way when I'm touring a museum, I don't always want to stop to talk to everybody" (Interview with Ryan Mullen November 24, 2011).

Presence of Veterans

When Maurice is in front of school children sharing his memories of his military service in World War II, dressed in his military blazer adorned with numerous medals, his performances reproduce and create knowledge by co-existing in the same time and place of his audience (Taylor 2003). This can be quite powerful. The body of the veteran as he recounts his narratives comes to 'stand in' for those who can no longer share their memories. This can generate an impact that artifacts or exhibits alone cannot achieve. Though artifacts imply that "they were there, with those people in that time and they are here, in this place, now, with us" (Henare 2005: 11), the presence of a veteran simultaneously communicates absence, as if to say 'I am here, but there are those who cannot be here'. Sturken writes how

the presence of bodies is essential to the production of cultural memory. Survivors, be they Vietnam veterans, people with AIDS, or others who have lived through traumatic public events, testify through the very presence of their bodies to the materiality of memory. *The body of a disabled veteran standing at the memorial speaks volumes about the war's cost* [...]. Survivors stand at the juncture of cultural memory and history, their bodies offering evidence of the multiplicity of memory stories. (1997: 12, emphasis added)

In attending the 2011 Remembrance Day ceremony at the Cenotaph in downtown Edmonton, which the Loyal Edmonton Regiment organizes, I was compelled by how the presence and use of bodies changed the space. While I have encountered

the Cenotaph at many different times over the years, this material object only seems to snap into focus on November 11, and becomes transformed through the presence of bodies that enter the space with the intention to finally see the Cenotaph. At any other time of the year, despite its explicit visibility and monumentality in front of City Hall, people tend to not pay attention to it in the same way. This illustrates that vision and visibility are not just about politics, but *choice* and cultural and political contexts. "Attention is not neutral but a specific model of behavior with a historical structure that [is] articulated in terms of socially determined norms" (Crary 1994: 24). The Cenotaph is also transformed in the context of *ritual* and the co-presence of many bodies. In the realm of ritual, "the body – with its desires, emotions, memories, sensations and actions – meets "space," [and] it is possible to transform the abstraction of *space* into *place* – the particular, the lived, and the unique" (Burk 2010: 112).

During this Remembrance Day ceremony, the timing and basic components are intentionally kept the same year after year to stress continuity with the past. However, it is only through the co-presence of bodies that the space, and the Cenotaph, become transformed. During the ceremony, four soldiers are stationed at each corner of the Cenotaph, their bodies stiff, controlled, and motionless as they stand at attention throughout the entire forty minutes of the outdoor ceremony. The bodies of those individuals who approach the Cenotaph to lay their wreaths are also powerful, because they are laying wreaths *for an absent someone else*. That someone is an absent body. Hans recounts how when he was the Commanding Officer, a family whose father "was killed in World War II [...] as a member of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment in Italy [...got] together as a family, and lay a wreath on behalf of him" (Interview with Hans Brink, April 26, 2012). Maurice, who lays a wreath during this particular Remembrance Day ceremony every year emphasized how he still recalls his comrades when doing so.

LH: What is your experience of Remembrance Day, how do you feel generally on Remembrance Day?

MW: [longer pause] Well it's a sad day because a lot of memories come floating back, you know when you're laying the wreath in honor of your comrades that didn't make it home so yeah it's pretty emotional for me.

The Impact of Performing Bodies

My discussion of performance and co-presence at FEP, the LERMM, and beyond, illustrates the impact of performance on those involved. Therefore, the potential of performance is that it can create memorable experiences that bring the past 'to life'. Unlike relatively static artifacts, exhibits, or signage located in museums, "performance[s] may [...] leave deep and long-lasting impressions on participants, which may then become the actual subject of transmission" (Argenti and Schramm 2010: 23). Extended conversations with interested visitors are often some of the most memorable experiences for interpreters.

LH: Do you have a certain memory of [...] an encounter with a visitor where you were doing interpretation which really stand[s] out to you?

RM: Yeah I do remember one that was very interesting, I had set-up a tea in the Rowand House, and I was inviting visitors to sit down [...] one lady and her friend, one of them was local and one of them was visiting from England, sat down with me, and at the time I was affecting and practicing an English accent [...] they sat down and started asking very pointed questions because they want[ed] to try to find [humour entering his voice] the holes in the story, and I think I managed to satisfy them.

TL: Any interpreter will tell you, when a visitor sticks with them and maybe has tea for an hour, and you have that long conversation, and you touch on a million different things, that's super valuable.

Performance therefore has the potential to move both interpreters and visitors beyond the historical facts or memories that form the content of these interpretive processes. "The *live [interpreter]* at living history museums, despite the institutions' heavy emphasis on the historic sources in their research and their literature, is what makes the history at living museums compelling to visitors" (Magelssen 2007: 143).

Memory Work and Dialogue

A significant implication of performance and co-present bodies within a museum is that unlike the use of artifacts and exhibits in isolation, performance and co-presence provides the opportunity for dialogic interactions. Artifacts and static exhibits cannot

speak back, but veterans and costumed historical interpreters can. As I proposed in Chapter 5, performances, since they involve subjects engaging in dialogue, may be more closely aligned with sincerity rather than authenticity (Jackson 2005). Sincerity is still concerned with the real and still related to authenticity rather than completely distinct, but in contrast to authenticity it is more temporal, processual, *performed*, and intersubjective. My interviews with Ryan and Tom, in addition to my own experiences working at FEP for just under a year made me think further about the distinction between popular and official memory, whereby “popular memory is popular as long as it is not collected, canonized or promoted by institutions or political entities” (Fabian 2007: 104). My sense of FEP is that while in many ways it is a location where official memories are established and communicated, as a living history museum it also provides a potential space in which these same memories can be contested. This is not to say everyone who visits the museum will or does contest the histories and memories they encounter. However, the potential exists, and Ryan and Tom both had recollections of such contestation and dialogues.

LH: So what various historical resources have [been used] either by yourself or others to inform how the First World War and its [aftermath are] portrayed on [1920] street?

TL: [...] I was interested to include, the places where museums have run into trouble, like the museum that had a panel on the World War II bombing [pause] of civilian targets [pause] and, it was a fairly reasonable panel [pause] [...] but the Legion [...] didn't think it was appropriate, and so there was a protracted battle between the museum and the Legion over how to *portray* this bombing campaign. And I think that's something obviously interpreters need to know too because, they're going to be talking about the things soldiers did and there's going to be visitors who [pause] want to argue about that, want to find a good guy and a bad guy, [want to] find, a right way to remember and a wrong way to remember, and it's not the interpreter's job to represent a clear picture, or even to educate even, necessarily, their job is to provoke thought, and so even having that conversation is valuable, but there's pitfalls there as well, as this museum found out. They of course ended up changing their [...] signs and [...] I think the curator involved resigned.

In contrast to larger scale controversies which often involve lobbying groups, politicians, institutions, or the media, the potential for dialogue or contestation of

museum displays can and does happen in the face-to-face interactions between visitors and costumed historical interpreters. When playing the character of the missionary Robert Rundle in the 1846 re-creation of Fort Edmonton, Ryan recalls having visitors critique the view of history his character re-presented.

LH: What do you think [...] you learned most from [portraying Robert Rundle] [pause] or what kind of messages do you think [...] about Fort life at the time that that character allowed you to explore?

RM: Oh *yeah*, there were a lot of them [...] especially because of Western Canadian history that has come since the Fur trade, [the] history surrounding Residential Schools, [...] [pause] it's still in *living* memory [pause] people still grew up, even co-worker of mine, went to Residential Schools and so there's lots of opinions around what missionaries did. Robert Rundle wasn't one of those ones moving people to Residential Schools but [longer pause] because of his role as a missionary he was *associated* with that, and so a lot of the visitors that I would meet - *not* all of them, but a lot of them would come in [pause] and sometimes demand that I *answer* [short laugh] for that [...] so the messages sometimes we were dealing with, [we were] obviously handling people's concerns about involvement in that. Sometimes people come out and say [to the interpreter in character] like "why do you think you're entitled to tell Indians that they should change their lifestyle?"

One can of course question the classifications and interpretations of artifacts and displays in museums, but the ability to enter into a dialogic interaction during the portrayal of historical narratives, as Ryan and Tom have both seen happen at FEP, is an interesting feature of costumed historical interpretation. Dialogue is best conceptualized as performance, in order to emphasize the living communion of a felt-sensing, "embodied interplay and engagement between human beings [when dialogue occurs]. [...Furthermore], dialogue resists conclusions" (Madison, on Conquergood, 2012: 10). Tom's approach to the work at FEP suggests he also believes living history interpretation aims to resist conclusions.

LH: Do you now [...] feel that there are any messages that are *not* included in how the First World War is portrayed, that maybe should be included, or you think have maybe been left out for a good reason?

TL: [The] idea is to provoke the visitor and if they're interested by what you talk about, and what they've seen, the most important thing is that

they go home and they think about it and they see links to their modern experience, or that they look up historical resources. So it's not our responsibility to tell the whole story, and that's good because absolutely there are a million stories that we're not telling, that we have a chance to tell [pause] that we might *want* to tell [pause] but in three minutes, can you do justice to that story? That's often the question you have to ask yourself. [...] So I worry that [pause] visitors see this [...] as the definitive experience that they have learning about the First World War, when it's not, it can just be a start to something.

Dialogue and the critique of information also occur at the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum. However, this does not necessarily take place within the museum when visitors look at the exhibits. Instead, as occurred in my first interview with Hans, I learned how the recent launch of the museum's new website brought public responses of 'errors' according to other's personal memories:

HB: Ever since our new webpage was up [...those who visit it now] will often [say] you know you wrote in this and this paragraph, that's a lie, I was there, it didn't happen this way [...] so we actually take all of those and - because they're first person accounts, there's a little more credibility than what the Canadian government wrote about it [...] or somebody else like that, so we have to sort of take a look at that and say well, if he was there and said this is what happened, then how can we prove it.

Thus, even within a military museum, whose memories are made visible is a matter of ongoing negotiation and consideration.

The work that takes place at, and through, the LERMM also works to bring different generations into contact, thus creating "contact zones" (Peers 2007). When Maurice travels to various schools around Remembrance Day or when Hans leads the *Soldier Through Time* summer camp at the museum, these activities "bring together groups within a locality that would otherwise have little occasion to meet, such as schoolchildren and young families with elderly people. Museums thus enact local communities as well as represent them" (Henare 2005: 247).

A final potential of performance is that through dialogue 'from the ground up', museums can begin to address intentional or unintentional claims to authenticity and objectivity within their material spaces. When chatting with visitors, museum employees

or volunteers should use these opportunities to emphasize the selection that has gone into creating museum exhibits and performances. This would involve pointing out what pieces or perspectives from the narratives are missing and why, thus addressing directly the processes of selection which interpreters and curators, such as Tom and Ryan, negotiate on a daily basis. Allowing alternate voices and sources of history and memory to be presented within museums would be another way to begin to address and unravel issues of authenticity and 'aesthetics of objectivity' within museums. The solution might be found within the unique potentials of performance.

Alternative modes of performance hold potential for filling those gaps where naturalism and just-the-facts fall short in answering a historically perpetuated injustice. In these cases, it would seem appropriate to take up Suzan-Lori Park's [1995] suggestion that theatre or performative sites can be incubators for the *creation* of historical events, rather than simply showcases for the recorded ones. (Magelssen 2007: 167)

Overall, the possibility of dialogue within museums has implications for how we analyze these spaces. Dialogue can take place through broader and large-scale critiques of museums and the exhibits they present (recall the accounts above of the World War II bombing exhibit and the backlash against the Smithsonian *Enola Gay* exhibit). However dialogue and critique can also take place in the face-to-face interactions within museums between employees or volunteers and visitors. Ryan's memories of the in-person critiques of the missionary character he portrayed and Hans' account of requests for changes to be made to the LERMM's website illustrate this smaller scale and daily contestation of museum exhibits or narratives can and does happen.

Conclusion

I began this chapter by defining my two approaches to performance: first, as a framework for approaching memory work, in which memories are actively created and shared by 'being there', and second, utilizing performance in a more literal and theatrical sense to understand costumed historical interpretation at FEP. Just as performance requires the body, I turned to exploring how memory work also requires the body. This requires scholars to move beyond approaches to memory that only address how these

processes work cognitively. Attention to memory work illustrates how a strict mind/body dualism cannot be sustained since memory does not only engage individuals from the 'neck up'. Maurice's assertion that some memories (of sensations, emotions, or events) cannot be shared further emphasizes the limitations that narrative and researchers' claims to empathy have during empirical research (Shuman 2006). Next, I explored performing bodies at FEP, the LERMM, and beyond. This indicated living history museums use performance as a primary tool of communication, and that visitors are also invited to perform in these museum spaces. The presence of veterans, whether through Maurice sharing his memories at schools, or veterans on Remembrance Day transforming spaces and objects, such as Cenotaphs, gestures to the absent bodies that cannot be there. Co-present bodies, in museums and beyond, can therefore have a significant impact of those engaged in performances, thus creating more memorable experiences than artifacts and exhibits alone. Then, I examined how through co-present bodies, dialogue 'from the ground up' can critique the histories, memories, and performances in museums, while also starting conversations and creating 'contact zones' (Peers 2007) for groups that wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to interact. This indicates the need to make those individuals and groups carrying out memory work in museums a focal point of ethnographic research so as to better understand the complexities and nuances of these everyday processes, performances, and negotiations. Finally, I ended this chapter by proposing dialogue and performance have the potential to make processes of selection and work more visible, and thus begin to undo the 'aesthetic of objectivity' and claims to authority museums often cultivate.

Chapter 7.

Conclusions and Possibilities

I now discuss some of the main conclusions, possibilities, and contributions of my research to memory and museum studies and ethnography. I then address some of the roads not taken in my research and finally propose future avenues of research.

Memory as Work and Memory as Mosaic

Conceptualizing memory as *work* (Fabian 2007), which I did throughout my research, indicates that memories are neither pre-given, nor pre-determined, but rather must be made, rehearsed, and enacted. Labour is therefore required to “keep the memories floating” (Interview with Maurice White, Dec 7 2011). Museums are one environment in which memories can be actively created and shared. While scholars have already conceptualized museums as sites of memory (Henare 2005; Murphy 2005; Nora 1989), few works outline *how* memory works on a daily basis in these environments. Museums also often fail to “show the wires or explain to visitors how the exhibits have been prepared, including the selection process, in order to demonstrate that their narrative of the subjects of display is only one of many possibilities” (Magelssen 2007: 134). By interviewing those who work or volunteer at museums my research addresses these absences in both the literature and daily museum practices. This thesis therefore posits researchers can learn much about daily complex practices, processes, and negotiations involved in the creation of histories and memories at museums by interviewing those who work at museums (for a similar approach see Erisman 1998; Magelssen 2007; Peers 2007).

Furthermore, while there have been significant efforts and government funding dedicated to the collection and preservation of oral histories of World War II veterans (The Memory Project 2008; Todd 2010), my research instead emphasizes how veterans

share these memories on a more consistent and daily basis beyond participation in Remembrance Day activities. It also moves beyond a strict focus on re-remembrance through Legion activities alone. While “Legion branches evoke an ‘environment of memory’ within which deep emotional responses may be sanctioned” (Thien 2009: 208), Maurice and Hans both expressed they do not have the time to participate in Legion activities because of their other time-intensive volunteer commitments. My research therefore illustrates that museums can act as another compelling ‘environment of memory’ for veterans within which to *actively* re-member their military service. It was clear from my interviews with Maurice that his involvement at the LERMM is not distinct from re-membering. Instead, the practice of sharing his memories is central to the work he does at the LERMM and beyond, whether he is travelling to schools for Remembrance Day activities, or participating in an oral history project, documentary film, or thesis project (such as this one).

Utilizing the concept of mosaic memory illustrates that memory cannot be understood as a static or simple process through which ‘experiences’ develop directly into ‘memories’. Instead, a single memory can be made up of various and even contradicting *memories* derived from different experiences (Fox 2010). In critically analysing my own memories of Remembrance Day in Edmonton and of interviewing Maurice, I came to see that these memories developed in complex ways. When it came to Maurice in particular, the memories I developed of him following our first meeting did not match my observations when I saw him a second time. Instead, I suggested that other sources, such as impressions from transcribing our first interview, viewing him in the documentary film *Bloody Italy* (Film, 2005 Dir. Wayne Abbott) and even memories of my grandfather, all impacted the original memory I had of Maurice. My experience of mosaic memory has a number of implications that extend beyond my research project. First, it illustrates that memories are created through complicated processes, for *both* ethnographers and their research participants. This thesis therefore contributes to the relatively new body of literature (Collins and Gallinat 2010; Fox 2010) which calls for ethnographers to:

write more about memory in their work. Examples of this self-reflexivity include philosophical discussions that detail how ethnographers re-member events; innovative typography that highlights how memory is fractured and subjective; and more applications and extensions of the

mosaic metaphor to articulate the complementary and contradictory functions of memory and representation. (Fox 2010: 17)

Blurred Boundaries

In examining how memory work *works* within museum spaces (and beyond), I illustrated in this thesis that the boundaries between popularly assumed dualisms (collective/individual memory, memory/history, remembering/forgetting, and the mind/body) blur in the memory work that takes place within museums and the interviews I conducted for my research. While my interviews involved Maurice, Hans, Tom, and Ryan sharing their individual memories with me, they carry out their work in consciously *public* ways. I argued that this public sharing of their memories included their participation in my research. Both FEP and the LERMM expressed interest in my research project and either provided me resources (such as the DVDs from the LERMM), or asked for a copy of my final thesis. Ethnographers must remember that our participants will enter into research with their own “agendas, interests, and motives that bring them into definitive relationships with [a] fieldworker” (Castañeda 2006: 84). My interviews with Maurice in particular illustrated that the public work he carries out at the LERMM to commemorate and re-member the World Wars cannot be separated from his own active re-membrance of his personal World War II military experiences.

Through my interviews and observations, it seemed that at FEP, the LERMM, and beyond, the distinction between memory and history can be blurred, particularly within museums. While commonly memory is understood to be ‘subjective’ in contrast to ‘objective’ history this distinction cannot be sustained. The work that takes place within museums is illustrative of the fact that memories and histories are both situated, influenced by present concerns and motivations and are the result of *labour*. There were certain aspects of, and encounters at FEP and the LERMM, where personal memories directly shape historical narratives. Memory/history become blurred when the memories ‘Wop’ May’s son shares of his father online are used at FEP to shape the narrative of this local pilot on 1920 street, a World War I soldier’s letters to his children are adapted into a travelling play for children, certain exhibits at the LERMM act as memorials for individuals, or Maurice frames his discussion of exhibits at the LERMM through the lens of his personal memories. In these instances, personal memories became subsumed,

and difficult to distinguish from broader historical narratives (Sturken 1997). Hans also suggested to me that there are few differences between memory and history. He conceptualized the difference as one of detail, with memories offering a more detailed view of an event or military campaign than historical narratives. At the same time, he implied both memory and history are about trying to find out exactly what happened. However, my interview with Tom indicated that while memory and history are difficult to distinguish in some ways, they can have different potentials. In talking specifically about how World War I is re-membered and re-presented at FEP, Tom suggested as World War I moves further into the past, the way this event is approached may potentially shift as well. However, with the World Wars occupying a central place in national narratives about our ('real' or imagined) shared past and its impact on Canadian identity (Anderson [1983] 2006; Keshen 2004) I remain hesitant about the degree to which interpretation of the World Wars will shift. As the incident of the backlash against the Smithsonian exhibit *Enola Gay* or the reactions to the suggestion Vimy Ridge was not that crucial to World War I (Interview with Tom Long December 9, 2011) clearly demonstrate, World War events remain politically and emotionally charged (Dubin 1999). Museums continue to matter to various agents and groups, since they "do not merely *represent* the past, [but also...] make historical 'truths'" (Magelssen 2007: xii). Museums are therefore important sites for anthropological analysis.

My interviews with Maurice supported the argument that memory work involves *both* forgetting and re-membering (Burk 2010; Connerton 2008; Fabian 2007). In expressing that he is thankful he cannot re-member particular wartime events, Maurice illustrates that forgetting is just as complex as re-membering. In stating that he felt his sanity was preserved by forgetting certain events and experiences, he appears to articulate that forgetting can, and should, not only be conceptualized as a negative or undesirable process. This also calls into question the assertion, within the context of the 'interview society' (Denzin 2003) that re-membering, and sharing memories is always beneficial for the teller.

My research indicates memory work involves the body and not just the mind. Sensory cues provided by the material spaces and activities at FEP, such as wood burning stoves, prompt particular memories from visitors' childhoods, or from previous visits to the museum. When sharing that the smell of liquorice today still causes him to

vividly re-call the dead soldier he saw when he smelled liquorice, it is clear Maurice retains sensory memories of his time overseas. Furthermore, while re-remembering particular experiences overseas, his gestures, tone, and embodied reactions during our interview suggested his memory work involves his body, as well as his mind. A strict binary division between the mind and the body is therefore unsustainable, as other scholars have already argued (Clough 2007, 2008). The blurred boundaries between the body and the mind can also be found within the practice of ethnographic research, recalling my bodily reactions and sensations (feelings of anxiousness, nervous stomach, lying awake at night) to research ethics, as outlined in Chapter 2. Just as performance requires the presence of bodies, so too does ethnographic fieldwork. This critiques:

the myth of the researcher as a detached head – the object of Thought, Rationality, and Reason – floating from research site to research site thinking and speaking, while its profane counterpart, the Body, lurks unseen, unruly and uncomfortable in the shadows of the Great Halls of the Academy.

(Spry 2001 quoted in Snyder-Young 2010: 887)

Authenticity, Accuracy, and an Aesthetic of Objectivity

Issues of authenticity, accuracy, and an ‘aesthetic of objectivity’ (Denzin 2003) are all bound up with attempting to re-present the ‘real’ within museums. My research and this thesis illustrated the various and complex ways in which issues of authenticity, accuracy, and ‘aesthetics of objectivity’ are negotiated within museums. It was evident from my interviews with Ryan and Tom that though these concerns are a focus in academic research (see Jackson 2005), they are also being discussed, debated, and negotiated from the ‘ground up’ within museum spaces. Ryan, Tom, and others working at FEP are constantly negotiating what should or not be included at the museum, and how things should be represented. For example, Tom and Ryan both actively negotiating during my interviews with them the ‘inaccurate’ presence of a World War I soldier and nursing sister in their uniforms on 1920 street, and the inaccurate ratio of one nursing sister and one soldier implied by their co-presence at FEP. At the same time, they both addressed it could be problematic to include a re-presentation of a Cenotaph on 1920 street, since it could trigger particular emotions or reactions, despite the fact that the construction of Cenotaphs reflects ‘accurate’ post-war practices. Hans shared

how veterans still contact the LERMM to assert parts of the LERMM website are wrong according to their own memories.

While it was clear from my interviews that issues of authenticity in museums are actively debated and negotiated on a daily basis within museum spaces, the material spaces of museums still either intentionally or unintentionally establish claims to authenticity, accuracy, and create an 'aesthetics of objectivity'. "Accuracy and objectivity are neither achievable goals nor transcendent qualities. [...] Accuracy and authenticity are socially constructed relationships" (Magelssen 2007: xiii). These issues are also bound up with authority and entitlement as to who has the right to re-present the past and in what way. This is inherently political. Museum practices often assert the ability of these institutions to 'accurately' re-present the past, and back-up such assertions through highlighting their hard work, attention to detail, and rigorous research and interpretive practices. FEP's website claims that visitors can experience the past *the way it was*. When at the museum, visitors may come to conflate their experience at the museum with an experience of the past, particularly during the re-creation of historical activities within living history museums (Gable and Handler 2007). This was made apparent through Tom's re-collections of some visitors leaving FEP assuming that Edmonton in the 1920s had unpaved roads, because 1920 street remains unpaved.

The processes of selection that take place within museums, are rarely made *visible* (Magelssen 2007), though curators and interpreters recognize these processes take place and are actively involved in them. This invisibility creates an 'aesthetic of objectivity' in that while museums *are* re-presenting real people and real events, they often do not address how they *shape* such re-presentations. The implication is that they are presenting an inherent and objective view of history, rather than one which is situated and must be contextualized. Overall, my research therefore speaks to the broader relevance of continuing to study museums. These are powerful and influential spaces. The memories, narratives, or performances taking place within museums actively shape how visitors walk away from these spaces understanding the past. They are "important venues in which a society can define itself and present itself publicly. Museums [...] endow [the past] with a tangibility, in a way few other things do" (Dubin 1999: 3). Since they are places of such potential authority and influence, museums need to begin complicating such 'authority' by critically assessing what they deem as

'accurate' and 'suitable' sources of knowledge. Curators and historians alike therefore must continue to extend beyond using only those elements of history that are *documented*. The histories of women, the poor and Aboriginal people, as told from their point of view, are a few common examples of narratives that remain silenced if only what was written or recorded historically is taken into consideration, particularly before the rise of social history in the 1980s (Magelssen 2007; Peers 2007). Anthropologists and some historians are now instead turning to alternative sources of historical data and addressing the limitations of the documented historical archive.¹⁹ Carter and McCormack's collection is a recent example of this shift in focus, by seeking "authors who were collecting oral histories and finding other forms of evidence including material culture, and putting these fragments to creative use [when studying Aboriginal women's historical experiences in the Canadian Northwest]" ((eds) 2011: 12). Curators and interpreters working in museums therefore must attend to the limitations of the primary sources they use and critically analyze the ways in which the documented historical record is *situated*. After all, the historical archive is only made up of "what people past (and present) have thought worthy of preservation" (Carter and McCormack (eds) 2011: 13). Finally, museums must address the ways in which their material spaces or performances either intentionally or unintentionally imply museums represent the past *the way it was*. Therefore museums, particularly living history museums, should work to better communicate that these spaces "are not just reconstructions [of the past], but *constructions*" (Peers 2007: 31. emphasis added).

Potentials of Performance

By examining performance, as generated by "being there" to re-member the past, or through the more theatrical orientation of costumed historical interpretation at FEP, my research illustrates two key concepts. First, memory work engages *both* the body and the mind, and second, performance and the co-presence of bodies within museum spaces offer different potentials than artifacts and exhibits alone, even though such performances take place within, and with reference to, environments filled with artifacts.

¹⁹ For example, recall Tom's use of 'fictional' graphic novels and comic books as sources of data when working on developing the World War I programming at FEP.

Performance requires *presence* (Taylor 2003) and thus requires the body. Conceptualizing the memory work which takes place through FEP and the LERMM as performance in turn allowed me to emphasize how the body is central to memory (Connerton 2011). The body is therefore involved in the layering of memories and implicated in their re-membrance. For example, my thesis illustrated that sensory memories are central at both FEP and the LERMM. Sensory memories pervaded my own memories of working at FEP and Maurice still has powerful sensory memories of his military experiences. Furthermore, when emphasizing how certain memories can never be verbalized in a way that would lead others to understand his experiences, it was clear Maurice's body maintains visceral memories of the emotions and sensations he felt in certain situations, though I cautioned my ability to access these. His movements, tone, and gestures during our interviews could only suggest to me that he was re-living sensations he could not express verbally to me. However, since all experiences and memory work involve the body and not just the mind, and emotions are complexly situated (Beatty 2010), my inability to understand Maurice's memories of certain events illustrates that ethnographers cannot have access to all facets of experience, even though ethnographers might claim such access through 'empathizing' with their participants (Shuman 2006).

My research further suggested performance within museums can generate unique impacts on interpreters, volunteers, and visitors alike as they all work to bring historical sources and narratives 'to life'. These performances and interactions can be memorable experiences that act to transmit and shape knowledge and understandings of the past (Argenti and Schramm 2010; Magelssen 2007; Peers 2007). Peers for example argues it is through co-presence of visitors with Aboriginal interpreters at living history museums that can help to move visitors beyond previously held misconceptions and stereotypes of Aboriginal peoples (2007). Museums act as 'cultural contact zones' (Peers 2007), bringing various cultural groups and generations into contact that otherwise may not find an opportunity to interact. Performance additionally allows for the dialogue and critique of museum exhibits, performances, and narratives from the 'ground up'. Therefore, ethnography is well suited to study such encounters through its focus on interviews and participant observation to explore discourses, performances,

narratives, experiences from the 'ground up' (Cerwonka and Malkki 2007; Jackson 2005; Simpson 2003)

Since museums can and do have a significant impact on those who work within and visit these spaces, "museums and their exhibitions have become controversial sites in a number of respects...museums have moved to the forefront in struggles over representation and over the chronicling, revising, and displaying of the past" (Dubin 1999: 5). However, as this thesis illustrated, these struggles do not *only* take place through the lobbying efforts of various groups, but rather as well in everyday dialogue that can provide the potential for critique from the ground up. This supports the literature which conceptualizes tourists or museum visitors as agents who can and do actively question and interrogate the performances, exhibits, or artifacts they encounter in museums (Gegner and Ziino 2012; MacCannell 2001). This focus on the potentials of performance emphasizes that museums are able to facilitate and *create* compelling and influential social interactions. Overall, my thesis additionally contributes to recent literature (Magelssen 2007; Peers 2007) that argues we can learn much from interviewing those who work or volunteer at museums and focusing on their experiences. Future research and scholarship should move beyond considering *only* the impact and role of artifacts and exhibits in museums (Henare 2005) or the experiences of visitors and tourists (Gatewood and Cameron 2004) when analyzing the potentials and complexities of museums, and the memory work that takes place within them.

Ethnography, Memory, and Critical Reflexivity

More broadly, my thesis contributes to literature arguing that ethnographers must be continuously and critically reflexive throughout the process of research (Gallinat 2010; Jackson 2005). This requires ethnographers to assess how 'knowledge' is generated through fieldwork, analysis, and writing. Experiences, even fieldwork experiences, are not foundational to knowledge, but instead must be contextualized (Scott 1991). Additionally, memories are not experiences *in and of themselves* but interpretations of experiences, which are shaped by variable and at times conflicting factors, as the concept of mosaic memory illustrates.

Therefore, throughout my research there were various ways in which I attended to critical reflexive analysis. When outlining my experience of mosaic memory while remembering Maurice and Remembrance Day ceremonies in Edmonton, I opened up my own memories to interrogation (Gallinat 2010). I also included sections of my previous thesis drafts. This choice illustrated that the means through which empirical experience is actively transformed into knowledge is never a direct or linear process. Rather, ethnographers must constantly tack back and forth between our 'on the ground research' and 'theory' (Cerwonka and Malkki 2007), and ethnographic analysis and interpretations will inevitably shift throughout the writing process. Inclusion of segments of previous thesis drafts was my way to make explicit these processes that are sometimes lost in a final thesis or ethnographic research project.

My critical reflexive analysis of how memory worked in my ethnographic fieldwork adds to the growing focus in ethnography on how memory functions in the processes of fieldwork and writing (Fabian 2007; Fox 2010; Gallinat 2010). While we are asking our participants to re-member in an interview, which presents its own difficulties, an ethnographer is also always re-remembering. Fabian argues that "memory and remembering are involved in every step of ethnography from field research to documentation, interpretation, and presenting our findings" (2007: 25). Memory is therefore a fundamental aspect of ethnographic fieldwork, and conversely, theorizing about memory should be ethnographically driven, since "ethnographic inquiry into memory practices provides us not only with facts and documentation but above all *with dilemmas and contradictions*" (Fabian 2007: 102, emphasis added). Ethnographers have more recently started critiquing the explicit role that memory has in ethnographic fieldwork (see Collins and Gallinat (eds) 2010). Addressing and exploring the effects of memory in ethnographic fieldwork has implications for how ethnographers are able to remain accountable, and sufficiently critical of how they impact and shape their own fieldwork and writing. As Gallinat argues, this helps to move ethnographers beyond simplistic statements about their own age, class, gender, etc., that do not tell much about the lived and actual experiences of the researcher, including those that occur within the field.

All anthropologists rely on their personal memories and experiences, not only in order to establish rapport but both when writing down (their notes)

and when writing up (their ethnography). The volume's central argument is that we should do this more openly, making our subjective ethnographic strategies explicit. This strategy takes us beyond self-reflexivity and opens the ethnographer's memories to analytical scrutiny. (Gallinat 2010: 28-29)

In Chapter 5, I traced how I approached the same research materials from two different theoretical frameworks at different stages of my analysis. My experiences and memories from working at FEP impacted my early analysis of my research materials, while I shifted to theories of issues of authenticity, accuracy, and the 'aesthetics of objectivity' later in my analysis. This further supported my argument that shifting our theoretical frameworks can have consequences for how we understand our research materials. In the case of my research, when I re-framed my analysis through the lenses of issues of authenticity, accuracy, and the 'aesthetic of objectivity' in museum spaces, I illustrated how museums are key sites where issues of power and authority are present within, and shape, the work that takes place within museums. Therefore, it is productive not only to consider the *placement* of theory within ethnographic research and literature, but also the various *timing* of theory within ethnography (Fabian 2007).

The question of the point of theory is almost always heard as a question of the *place* of theory...but theory has no place unless it has time. [Therefore we need] to reflect, not so much on theory's place as on its time, that is, on moments in the production of knowledge leading from research to writing in which we must take positions; moments that determine how we get from one statement to another, from one story to another, indeed from one sentence to another.

(Fabian 2007: 7)

Roads Not Taken

My decisions, negotiations, and re-actions that emerged throughout the processes of ethnographic fieldwork and writing inevitably took me down particular 'roads' and diverted me from others. In this section I consider the limitations of my analysis, or missed interactions and opportunities for particular analyses that occurred throughout my research

I realized there were interesting gender dimensions within my fieldwork. While not explicitly a focus of my analysis, it is interesting that I interviewed only men who

appeared to be from broadly the same social 'position'. They are roughly middle-class (though recall how I *assumed* their class positions based on performances and other visual cues), Caucasian, and three of them have University education. I related in many ways to my interviewees. I am Caucasian, University educated, middle-class, and around the same age as Ryan and Tom. Therefore, my analysis of my interviews with these individuals, along with my own experience working at Fort Edmonton Park from 2009-2010 was situated in very specific social and historical frameworks. It became apparent as my research progressed that my own understanding of museums and the interpretive work they do was culturally constructed. My memories of working at FEP are dominated by the comedic and playful approach interpreters often took in their work (though my co-workers were also dedicated to creating rigorous and detailed historical interpretation and performances). However, as Peers (2007) and Magelssen (2007) effectively illustrate, respectively, Aboriginal and African American interpreters have very different goals, experiences, and challenges when working as costumed historical interpreters. Peers' work in particular illustrates that the stakes are different for Aboriginal interpreters. While they of course have the potential to enjoy their interpretive work and find it just as intellectually and emotionally satisfying as their fellow interpreters, Aboriginal interpreters expressed that they face very different encounters and challenges than do white interpreters (Peers 2007). Aboriginal interpreters describe their participation in living history museums as 'playing themselves'. While they wear a period costume to interpret past events and practices at these museums, at the end of the day when they take off their costumes, they are *still* Aboriginal and identified as such by society. One Aboriginal living history interpreter summarized the complicated nature of this process when asserting "we don't represent Native people; we are Native people! And we want our public to know that we're still alive and living here" (Kieth Knecht quoted in Peers 2007: 66). My brief experience as a costumed historical interpreter is therefore situated in a specific set of social and political contexts. I came to recognize that I was one of "the non-Native university students who make up the majority of interpreters [who] seldom feel the past interfering in their lives in this way" (Peers 2007: 67). After removing their historic costumes, Aboriginal interpreters remain Aboriginal, with the stereotypes that they can and do encounter, when they move from their work back into their everyday lives (Peers 2007).

However, though I interviewed individuals from similar social positions, and while aspects of identity such as age, gender, ethnicity, class, etc., have a significant impact on historically situated experiences, upon further reflection and in returning to my research materials, I realized these categories of identity are not monolithic (Robertson 2004). For example, when reviewing the transcriptions of my interviews with Maurice much later in the writing process, I noted that he perceives significant differences between his military experiences and those of other generations.

LH: Have you had the opportunity to speak with soldiers that have come back [recently]?

MW: Yes I met quite a few of them, quite often [...] it's certainly *different* than our war, than the Second World War [pause] [...] there's really - I don't find [many] similarities, what they're doing now and what we had to do.

LH: What do you think are the main differences?

MW: Well as I see it and I'm only going by what I'm gathering you know, these soldiers in Afghanistan for example they'll go out and maybe on patrol, they might be out a night or two and, then they come back to a nice comfortable bed and warm dinners and [...] they're inside of a nice warm shelter [pause] we didn't have that [...] I spent most of my two years outside or in a building that was half blown away [...] and you had no warmth or no protection from the elements, the weather elements, so it's totally a different war [...] and of course their firepower [is] so much greater than what we had.

LH: Right.

MW: But things change.

Therefore, though Maurice and Hans both volunteer at the LERMM as 'veterans' they likely had widely different military experiences and memories since they participated in different conflicts. These differences could have been an interesting direction in which to take my research instead of focusing more on the similarities my participants seemed to share.

I also came to see how my attention to the potentials performance offer within museums suggested my class position shaped my understanding of and approach to museums. I have been enthralled with museums for many years, an interest which developed in part through my time working at FEP. However, museums facilitate and

actively create nostalgia and reverence of the past, both which originally developed within “a white middle-class endlessly absorbed in its cultural products” (Levin 2007b: 12). This may have pre-conditioned me to anticipate that interesting or influential actions will take place within museums. Nostalgia acts as a form of epistemology in that it is “a unique way of knowing that valorizes certain positive aspects of the past, endowing them with importance as truths” (Levin 2007a: 93). Visiting a museum can also be expensive. Smaller museums, such as the LERMM, are free, but with a daily family admission costing \$55 at Fort Edmonton Park (Fort Edmonton Park Website, Admission: 2012), this museum is not readily accessible for all Edmontonians. Overall, my situated position within particular economic contexts likely shaped my attention and analysis and resulted in me taking some roads of analysis but not others.

When focusing on my interviews with Maurice, Hans, Tom, and Ryan, there were also research encounters taking place at the edges of these primary interactions. For example, in parts of my thesis, I make mention of brief conversations with other volunteers or former colleagues. These conversations include those I re-called having with former work colleagues or small talk with other volunteers at the LERMM. I also observed interesting interactions at the LERMM such as in-person research requests in the main office. Therefore there were other people populating the museums and engaging in interesting social encounters and memory work that I could have made a more significant part of my observations and conversations.

As outlined in Chapters 2 and 5, my previous experience working at FEP as a costumed historical interpreter shaped the conversations I had with Tom and Ryan. My familiarity with the site meant I did not ask questions about the layout of the museum or more basic explanations about the activities and performances that take place within living history museums. Additionally, my original theoretical lenses through which I viewed my research materials, shaped in part by working at FEP, led me to approach my research materials in particular ways. This influenced my earlier questions and interactions and led me to make particular choices within my fieldwork encounters. For example, I did not ask Maurice or Hans what they felt was missing from the exhibits at the LERMM because I originally approached their work at the museum as bound up directly with their personal memories, experiences, emotions, and identity. With my later shift in theoretical lenses, I realized that in those particular encounters, it would have

been productive to understand that *all* narratives and memories are told from a position of direct and personal experience. This also illustrates that the theoretical orientation with which we enter our ethnographic fieldwork will condition us to ask particular questions and take different ‘roads’ as opposed to others. Ultimately, “in subtle ways, theoretical positions and recommended subjects within our field tell us what we should remember and, when deeply internalized, they may determine what we can remember or must forget when [creating research materials]” (Fabian 2007: 134).

Another potential ‘road’ which emerged throughout my research, but which I did not take, was attention to the process of re-membering through cyber spaces. It was clear that FEP and the LERMM both have an online presence as a way of expanding their audiences and providing additional educational tools within Edmonton and beyond. Presently, there are discussions as to how social media can and has been used to encourage younger generations to re-member past events such as the World Wars (Smith 2011) and more recent conflicts (Hess 2007). The Internet offers different potentials than the material spaces of museums, acting as another ‘space’, in which memories are “ephemeral and fluid, undergoing constant transformation” (Assmann and Conrad 2010: 4). However, though museums will presumably continue to utilize cyber spaces, this does not replace the unique potentials of performance and co-presence outlined in this thesis. While discussing in detail the potentials of utilized podcasts as a multimedia tool to expand FEP’s audience, a project which Ryan worked on at FEP, he similarly acknowledged that online spaces and the physical spaces of museums in which performances take place offer different potentials.

LH: What kind of different things or benefits do you think [are made possible] using multimedia technology [...] at the park?

RM: What I liked about podcasts is [they have] obviously a wider reach and in a historical [site] that’s only open for four months of the year, that can be *crucial* if there are people out there who want to have that sort of intellectual connection to what we can talk about, I think that would be a great use for a podcast. I kind of wish we could do more of them. But the benefits for being in the program [at the museum] is that you can join in the moment, the podcast is an interface that - there’s kind of a barrier between the listener and the presenter, whereas our museum programs are by design meant [longer pause] they’re at their best when visitors can participate, and we know that, and so we try to design them [for that participation].

Overall, though it was not an area I focused on in my own research, attention to how museums and individuals from ‘the ground up’ utilize cyber spaces to actively re-member is a compelling future avenue of ethnographic research.

Future Avenues of Research

My research suggests that a number of future avenues of research could be pursued. While memory work is taking place within museum spaces on an everyday basis, further detailed attention is required as to *how* memory works from the ‘ground up’. Ethnography is therefore a well suited methodology for approaching these types of inquiries. Additionally, any attention to museums and other representations of the past in general must re-member that memories are not inherent but rather involve active processes of selection and labour.

When studying museums, researchers should not pay attention to artifacts and exhibits alone. Performance and the co-presence of workers/volunteers with visitors offer interesting and significant research potentials. Two key areas include providing the opportunity for dialogue through the co-presence of employees or volunteers with visitors and bringing groups into contact that otherwise might not encounter each other. Further addressing dialogue and encounters between generations or cultural groups that can take place in museums would be a useful focal point in future research. Such a focus would acknowledge the ability that museums have to “enact local communities” (Henare 2005: 247). Museums create environments in which complex social encounters take place, bringing together various groups and generations, and often reaching broader audiences than academic research. My research further proposes that performance can create far more memorable experiences and impacts for museum employees, volunteers, and visitors. At both FEP and the LERMM, whether the interpreter portraying the World War I soldier is leading visitors through a make believe trench warfare drill, or Maurice, while standing in a classroom, shows the film *Bloody Italy* (Film, 2005, Dir. Wayne Abbott) and then answers questions about his wartime experiences, these practices add something ‘extra’ to the narratives which express memories and historical information. Therefore in order to better understand how visitors learn or engage with museums, researchers cannot focus on artifacts and exhibits alone, but rather must pay careful attention to the social interactions and

encounters that performance and co-presence within museums and beyond have the potential to shape and prompt.

In attending to performance and the experiences of those who work or volunteer at museums, scholars must pay further attention to the more ongoing and daily practices which take place in museums. It was clear from my interviews with Ryan and Tom in particular that those who work in museums may negotiate issues of selection and authenticity on a daily basis. Overall, while museums are institutions that are often government funded, a top down approach to museums and their narratives and exhibits is not effective. My research and the literature both indicate instead that museums now more than ever involve responses and discussions from the ground up. This was clear in the face-to-face critique Ryan received for his portrayal of a historical figure from the Fur Trade era complicit in the devastating consequences of European settlement or when the LERMM receives emails stating their website 'got it wrong' according to a veteran's personal memories of the events that are detailed online. Magelssen outlines the existence of post-tourists who are "creative, politically aware individuals, capable of engaging several performances, social exchanges, narratives, and relationships simultaneously" (2007: 138). Various agents are now involved in museum work and they all have variable purposes and agendas (Gegner and Ziino 2012). At the same time, recognizing the agency of those contributing to the processes in museums "does not suggest an equal capacity to shape its project: the processes of heritage formation are inherently an unequal power struggle" (Gegner and Ziino 2012: 3). Therefore, museums and the work that takes place within them are never static. Future research must pay attention to and work to unpack the processes by which museums change and respond to critique from the ground up.

The dynamic memory work that takes place at FEP and the LERMM and beyond suggests that even as events, such as the World Wars, pass further into the past chronologically, the re-presentation of such events in museums can continue to be politically and emotionally charged. Museums such as FEP and the LERMM are not static spaces, but instead will continue to negotiate which narratives, exhibits, artifacts, and performances they choose to re-present. It will be interesting to see how the narratives surrounding the World Wars shift as they continue to pass from 'living memory', as Tom suggests is happening with FEP's discussion of World War I.

However, given the central role of the World Wars within Canadian identity as ‘good’ and ‘just’ wars, broader social and political forces will likely continue to influence how these events are re-membered within museum spaces. Studying how the past is re-membered tells us less about the past than it does about the *present*. The study of museums:

is not so much about the study of the past as understanding the utilization of the past in the present [so that] we need to recognize that [museums] too, [change] over time. [Their] nature is constructed and contingent, rather than immutable, [and they are] liable to be imbued and overlaid with new meanings and significance as political, cultural, demographic and economic context change. (Gegner and Ziino 2012: 4)

Finally, my research indicates that the memories, narratives, and performances that are utilized, encountered, and developed within museums are always characterized by selection. It is impossible to ever tell the ‘whole’ story because this cannot exist. There will always be multiple histories situated within particular social, cultural, political, and economic frameworks, told from equally situated points of view. While my ethnographic research focused on what types of memories, narratives, or performances were *present* in two different museum spaces, other studies could take the opposite approach by attending to what is *absent* in museum memories, narratives, and performances, since “what may be materially absent [can] still influence people’s experience of the material world” (Bille *et al* 2010: 4).

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Appendices

Appendix A.

Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form

Information Sheet for Interview

Title of Project:

“Contemporary Commemoration of the World War Dead: Designs, Participation, and Responses”
[Title later changed to: ‘To Keep the Memories Floating’: The Complexities of Memory Work]

Principal Investigator:

Lisa Hareuther, MA student, Department of Sociology and Anthropology.
Email: [REDACTED]. Ethics Application Number: 2011s0549

My name is Lisa Hareuther and I am a graduate student in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby BC. I am beginning my MA research here in Edmonton, Alberta in Fall 2011.

Goals of My Study:

I would like to invite you to participate in my MA research project. I am interested in the nature of memories and how we commemorate and remember military conflicts. In talking with you, I hope to hear about your experiences with, and involvement in commemorating the world wars. Additionally, I would like to discuss your feelings and responses to these current commemorative projects.

Use of Interview Data:

This research will be used to write my Master of Arts (MA) thesis, and may additionally be used to write scholarly articles, conference presentations, a brief report for possible distribution to the Royal Canadian Legion, or other public organizations. Please note that your participation in this interview is completely voluntary and that you can stop our interview at any time, for any reason, without consequence. However, please note that it is difficult, if not impossible, to withdraw results once they have been published in my MA thesis.

Structure of Our Interview and Your Role:

I am interested in interviewing you to learn about your experiences of participating in a ‘remembrance project’ that commemorates military conflicts, discuss your responses to and opinions of these projects, and the messages that you think are emphasized in the ‘remembrance project’ that you are or formerly were involved in.

The interview will take place in either one or two segments, according to your choice and convenience. During the first session, I will conduct and record an interview with you that will last under an hour and a half. You also have the option to decide that you do not want the interview recorded. I will take notes during interview sessions. Following the initial interview, I will invite you to meet with me for a second time to review the transcribed interview with you (provided the interview has been audio-recorded). The purpose of this review session is to offer you an opportunity to clarify your initial statements, should you wish to do so, and to reflect on the content and themes of the interview. This second session, if you choose to participate in it, will also be recorded, if you allow me to do so, and will last under 45 minutes.

Anticipated Risks and Benefits

At this stage in the research, the anticipated benefits to you of participating in this project are as follows: you will be provided an opportunity in which you can share your thoughts, beliefs,

opinions, and experiences about your participation in a 'remembrance project' that will in turn contribute to anthropological research and knowledge. Better understanding projects that commemorate the world wars are especially important at this point in time as individuals who lived during these conflicts leave us, and the generations to which they passed on their memories are now responsible for remembering the world wars and the numerous contributions of the Canadian Armed Forces.

There are no anticipated risks associated with this research project. If there are any topics that arise during the interview that you are uncomfortable talking about, you can inform me that you do not want to talk about them. If you indicate there is a topic that you do not want to talk about, I will ask you at that point whether you would like for me to change the topic, or conclude the interview. There will be no consequences for either changing the topic or concluding the interview.

Please note that I have obtained consent from your organization and/or employer to carry out my research. Additionally, there will be no adverse effects on your membership in the organization or your employment with your organization or company if you refuse to participate or withdraw after agreeing to participate in my research project.

I will go over the anticipated risks and benefits with you when you are provided the informed consent form; at this point you will be allowed to add, delete, and amend the list of potential anticipated risks and/or benefits discussed above.

Questions and Concerns:

Any concerns, questions, or complaints regarding this interview may be directed to:

Dr. Dara Culhane (Lisa Hareuther's Supervisor)
Department of Sociology Anthropology
Room AQ 5072
Simon Fraser University
8888 University Drive
Burnaby, B.C.
V5A 1S6
Email: [REDACTED]

or

Hal Weinberg, Director
Office of Research Ethics
Simon Fraser University
Burnaby, B.C. Canada
V5A 1S6
778-782-6593
Email: [REDACTED]

Informed Consent Form

I, the undersigned, have been invited by **Lisa Hareuther**, an MA student in the Sociology and Anthropology department, Simon Fraser University, to participate in her research project for the requirement of her MA thesis.

The title of the project is: “Contemporary Commemoration of the World War Dead: Designs and Performances.” [Title later changed to: **‘To Keep the Memories Floating’: the Complexities of Memory Work**]. Ethics Application Number: 2011s0549

- (a) I have been advised that the purposes and goals of this project are a) to conduct an interview on the topic of my experience of participating in a ‘remembrance project’ that commemorates the world wars, b) discuss my responses to and opinions of the ‘remembrance project’ that I participated in, and c) the messages that I think are emphasized in the ‘remembrance project’ in which I currently am or was previously involved in.

(signature)

The following three points will be negotiated between the researcher and the interviewee prior to conducting the interview:

- (i) The anticipated risks are: there are no anticipated risks associated with this research project. I have been informed that if there are any topics that arise during the interview that I am uncomfortable talking about that I can tell the researcher, **Lisa Hareuther** that I would like to change the topic or conclude the interview without consequence.

(signature)

- (ii) The anticipated benefits are: I have the opportunity to share your thoughts, beliefs, opinions, and experiences about my participation in a ‘remembrance project’. The thoughts and experiences that I share will help contribute to anthropological research and knowledge. Better understanding commemorative projects are especially important at this point in time as individuals who lived during these conflicts leave us, and the generations to which they passed on their memories are now responsible for remembering these military conflicts.

(signature)

OR

(Continue to Page 2 of 4)

(iii) There are no anticipated risks or benefits.

(signature)

I have been informed that my participation is voluntary, and that I am allowed to remove myself from this interview at any time and for any reason without consequence.

(signature)

I have been informed that the researcher, Lisa Hareuther, has obtained consent from my organization and/or employer to carry out her research, and that there will be no adverse effects on my membership in the organization or my employment with my organization or company if I refuse to participate or withdraw after agreeing to participate in this research project.

(signature)

I have been informed that it is difficult, if not impossible, to withdraw results once they have been published in the researcher's, Lisa Hareuther's, MA thesis.

(signature)

(c) AUDIO RECORDING

Please circle one of the options below:

I CONSENT / I DO NOT CONSENT to the researcher, Lisa

Hareuther, audio recording this interview.

(d) FOLLOW UP INTERVIEW

Please circle one of the options below:

I CONSENT / I DO NOT CONSENT to being contacted by Lisa Hareuther at a future date for scheduling a second follow up interview to review the transcription of this interview.

(Continue to Page 3 of 4)

(e) **CONFIDENTIALITY**

(i) I agree that my name and/or photographic image, and/or any audio recordings of my voice may be used in the report of this research project.

(signature)

OR

(ii)

(a) I do not want my name included in the report of this research project. I have been advised by the researcher that a mutually agreed upon pseudonym will be used instead.

(signature)

OR

(b) I do not want any photographic image, or audio/visual recorded of my voice included in the report of this research project. I have been advised by the researcher that she or he will adjust photographic images in such a way that I am not identifiable, and/or will transcribe recordings into text.

(signature)

(c) I am satisfied that the procedure set out in (ii) (a) and (ii) (b) above will insure confidentiality.

(signature)

I understand that only the researcher and principle investigator **Lisa Hareuther**, and the co-investigator Dr. Dara Culhane (**Lisa Hareuther's** Senior Supervisor), will see this signed informed consent form, unless I authorize either of them, in writing, to share it with any other party.

(signature)

(Continue to Page 4 of 4)

(f) RETENTION OF DATA

(i) I understand that data will be retained on a memory stick in a locked filing cabinet in the possession of **Lisa Hareuther**, in Edmonton Alberta. The data will be used for my MA thesis, future academic publications, presentations, and potentially a brief report for the Royal Canadian Legion, or other public organizations. Data will not be destroyed, but rather stored and potentially used for future purposes (such as writing academic articles, or academic presentations).

(signature)

(ii) I understand that if I so choose, the researcher, **Lisa Hareuther**, will provide me with a copy of the recording or transcript from my interview with her as a gift that I will be able to use for personal, family, or other archival uses.

(signature)

QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS:

I understand I can raise any questions or complaints about this research project or the conduct of the researcher by contacting Dr. Dara Culhane (Lisa Hareuther's Supervisor) Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Simon Fraser University, AQ 5072; [REDACTED]

or

Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director, Office of Research Ethics, Simon Fraser University, 778-782-6593; [REDACTED]; application # 2011s0549.

(signature)

I understand that if I would like to obtain a summary of the research that I can contact the researcher, **Lisa Hareuther**, at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

(signature)

I am over 18 years of age.

(signature)

Appendix B.

Interview Questions

The semi-structured interview questions for my first interviews with Tom, Ryan, Maurice, and Hans are listed below. I tailored them to fit more specifically with the differing styles of museum interpretation that takes place at FEP and the LERMM. At FEP, they carry out living history interpretation, while at the LERMM they emphasize exhibit cases, story boards, and artifacts. My interview questions for my second interviews with Ryan, Maurice, and Hans were created to reflect specific themes or questions that came out of my first interviews with them and therefore differed significantly. During all of my interviews, as each interview progressed I used themes that my interviewees brought up to ask additional questions. Therefore, the interview questions listed below were not the only questions I ended up asking during my interviews. They instead only acted as a starting point.

Initial Interview Questions for FEP Interviews

- 1) When did you become involved in historical interpretation? (Probe – i.e. the streets worked on, memories of interactions with visitors that stand out, what it is that historical interpretation *does* or has the potential to do.)
- 2) Why did you decide to become involved in historical interpretation?
- 3) What are your goals in the planning and implementation of historical interpretation?
- 4) How is World War I represented on 1920s street? (If it seems relevant, perhaps probe for how the space itself is used as a prompt. Ask about the characters. What do you think these different characters say about the experience of male versus female Edmontonians?)
- 5) What historical resources have been used either by yourself or others to inform the portrayal of World War I on 1920s street?
- 6) What messages so you think are communicated to visitors through the museum's portrayal of World War I?
- 7) Do you think that there are messages that are not included in the portrayal of World War I that you feel should be included?
- 8) Do you have any stories or memories about how visitors have responded to the portrayal of World War I at the museum? (i.e. veterans of WWII, current military individuals): any critiques [from such visitors]?
- 9) Can you recall an incident that puzzled, surprised, or excited you during your involvement with historical interpretation and with the portrayal of World War I [at FEP]?

The following questions worked to transition into Remembrance Day memories in Edmonton

- 10) Did you grow up in Edmonton?
- 11) Do you have any memories of Remembrance Day, growing up here in Edmonton?
- 12) What did you do on Remembrance Day this year?
- 13) Where in the city (either Edmonton itself, or the greater Edmonton area) do you think Remembrance is present outside of the [museum]?

Initial Interview Questions for LERMM Interviews

- 1) When did you become involved with remembrance projects at the Regimental museum?
- 2) Why did you decide to become involved with remembrance projects at the Regimental museum?
- 3) How do you feel when you are involved in remembrance projects?
- 4) What messages do you think are important to communicate to museum visitors, or the community, in our commemoration of the world wars?
- 5) Do you have any stories or memories about how visitors to the museum, or members of the community (i.e. school children, etc), have responded to the commemoration of the world wars?
- 6) Can you recall an incident that puzzled, surprised, or excited you during your involvement with remembrance projects at the Regimental museum?

Follow-up Interview Questions for Ryan Mullen

- 1) Are there any changes or modifications that you think should be made to the transcript? With this, I am not referring so much to typos, but specifically as to whether I have made any mistakes with your stories. Also, in what way would you like for these materials to be represented in my thesis? Edited, or should I maintain all of the 'extras' of your natural speech?
- 2) Is there anything that you would like to add to what you said during our first interview?
- 3) One thing that I find interesting about my time working at [FEP] and of 'living history museums' in general, is this concept of authenticity. How accurate should one aim to be in the act of interpretation, in your opinion? Where would you draw the line in authentically representing history (if at all)?
- 4) One section [of our interview] I found particularly interesting was the fact that within the *Over the Top* program, is the fact that these types of re-enactments used to happen at Fairs in the post-war years – do you recall what the 'purpose' or 'intent' of this was [historically]?
- 5) What is the main difficulty of representing events that took place overseas (World War I) on 1920s street, which is meant to represent the home front at that time?
- 6) Why do you think that the soldier has more [interpretive] opportunities currently than the nurse in representing post-war Edmonton?
- 7) What sort of lore do you think is attached to Cenotaphs?
- 8) You had mentioned when talking about memories of Remembrance Day growing up in St. Albert that the Second World War was emphasized; why do you think this was the case?
- 9) Why do you go to the Remembrance Day ceremony year after year?
- 10) Do you have any questions for me regarding my research?
- 11) Do you have any questions for me about how I transcribed our [first] interview?

Follow-up Interview Questions for Maurice White

- 1) Can you tell me about the Remembrance Day ceremony at City Hall that you participate in every year? What happens during that ceremony? What do you feel is the most powerful part of that ceremony?
- 2) In the first interview you mentioned you were involved in two other [documentaries]: the paratroopers and one on Tommy Prince. Were you a Paratrooper yourself? If so, what do you remember about that experience, if anything? I'm very interested in the film about Tommy Prince, can you tell me about him? When did they approach you about this project?
- 3) In the first interview you spoke about the government program where students go overseas and conduct a research project on a veteran of their choice; do you recall whether any of those students ever did a project on their own relative who may have fought and died in the war?
- 4) What do you think is the best way for people to remember the world wars, besides attending a ceremony on Remembrance Day? How do you see other people remembering in Edmonton?
- 5) Do you ever get to wear your blazer and medals in Edmonton during the year, besides Remembrance Day? If so, how do people react to you when they see your blazer? Do they ask you questions about them?
- 6) Can you show me your favourite exhibit, or exhibits in the museum? Why is it your favourite?
- 7) Do you have any questions for me regarding my research?

Follow-up Interview Questions for Hans Brink

- 1) What do you think the difference is between history, as told by more official sources and the individual memories of these events that the museum works with and encounters? Do you think that one is more accurate than the other or do they achieve different things?
- 2) You mentioned in our first interview that you also do some volunteer work at the Royal Alberta Museum (RAM). Can you tell me about the collection of military artifacts that they have at the RAM? Is it extensive or more limited than the LERMM? Does the RAM collection focus on World War I and II artifacts or does it go beyond this to collect and catalogue artifacts from other military engagements?
- 3) Do you think that the RAM and the LERMM have different approaches to, or goals, when it comes to military artifacts? That is to say, because the LERMM is the museum of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment specifically, does it have a different task or objective?
- 4) You mentioned that a lot of research requests come via the Internet and I know just recently the LERMM overhauled its website. How big of a role does the Internet play in the work that the museum does?
- 5) Do you think that the Internet has changed the way that people can and do remember or commemorate military conflicts? Why or why not?
- 6) You spoke of your participation [at the LERMM] on Remembrance Day for 2011. Do you remember approximately how many people visited the museum that day, and what types of activities were held?
- 7) You mentioned during our first interview that you wanted to expand on the Afghanistan display. How would you expand this display, what would you include, and what would its focus be?
- 8) Do you have any questions for me about my research?