

A Study of Visitors to the Smithsonian Institution Castle



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Smithsonian Institution

Office of Policy and Analysis
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Cover: *The Castle at dusk*. Smithsonian Castle Images. Photo by Ken Rahaim, Smithsonian Institution

Preface

Providing useful information and analyses to Smithsonian offices and museums is a core mission of The Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A). Thus, we are pleased to participate in planning for interim use of the Castle and the Arts and Industries Building (AIB).

In OP&A, Zahava D. Doering had primary responsibility for designing a study of visitors to the Castle, coordinating the data collection, and overseeing the project as a whole. Two extraordinary staff members, Sarah Block, Researcher, and Katie Behrens, an intern from Syracuse University, assisted with all aspects of the study, undertook responsibility for recruiting interviewers, editing, and data preparation, as well as ensuring that personal interviews were transcribed. Andrew Pekarik analyzed the data.

This study could not have been completed in a timely fashion without the assistance of nearly every OP&A staff member and intern. They volunteered to interview during especially busy times and ensured that we had high visitor cooperation rates. I thank them all for their work.

Carole M. P. Neves ,
Director,
Smithsonian Office of Policy and Analysis

Introduction and Methodology

Background

Planning is underway for interim use of the Castle and the Arts and Industries Building (AIB) while the Smithsonian Institution (SI) pending final decisions regarding its future function. To assist in these planning efforts, OP&A conducted a study of visitors to the Castle. The goal was to provide information and insights related to visitor information/orientation needs and identify ways of changing or improving them. This is a final report based on the study.

Study goals

The study goals were to:

- identify what visitors want by way of information about SI when they arrive at the Castle;
- determine the preferred ways of getting this information (e.g. staff member to talk to, pamphlets, brochures, personalized computer itineraries, smartphone apps, etc.); and
- if visitors want to talk with a staff member, find out what type of contact they want (e.g., roving person, desk staff, greeters, etc.).

Appendix A contains the questionnaire that was used in the survey and Appendix B provides tables of the frequency distributions of survey answers.

Method

OP&A's study team interviewed visitors both arriving at and leaving the Castle to explore the study issues and determine what should be included on the survey. Visitors were asked about their intentions before they came, the facilities they planned to visit, the time they expected to spend at the Smithsonian, what materials they had used to plan their visit, what they did in the Castle, what they expected to get in the way of information, and (if appropriate) what languages would have been helpful. The open-ended interviewing format allowed visitors to speak freely and interviewers probed further regarding any unexpected specific issues that were raised. Interviews were recorded for subsequent analysis. A total of 24 interviews were conducted. (Attachment C contains the basic characteristics of the visitors that were interviewed as well as quotes relevant to the study that are not incorporated in the report text.)

As the interviewing was going on, OP&A developed the survey that was to be administered to visitors exiting the Castle. The survey design was modified as relevant issues arose during the open-ended interviews. The survey was administered over five days, between 9:30am and 5:00pm at both the Mall and Garden exits from the Castle. During the scheduled interview

hours approximately 5,000 visitors exited. From these, a representative sample of 664 were selected for interviewing; 416 completed the self-administered questionnaire, for a cooperation rate of 63%.

Basic Findings

Visit Characteristics

First Time

Over half of the visitors (52%) were making a repeat visit to the Smithsonian.

- About one in three respondents visited the Smithsonian in the last two years (30%), and one in four visited the Smithsonian more than two years ago (22%).
- Among repeat visitors, on average it had been 8 years since their last visit, but the median is 2 years, i.e., half of the repeat visitors had been to SI within the last 2 years.

Planning

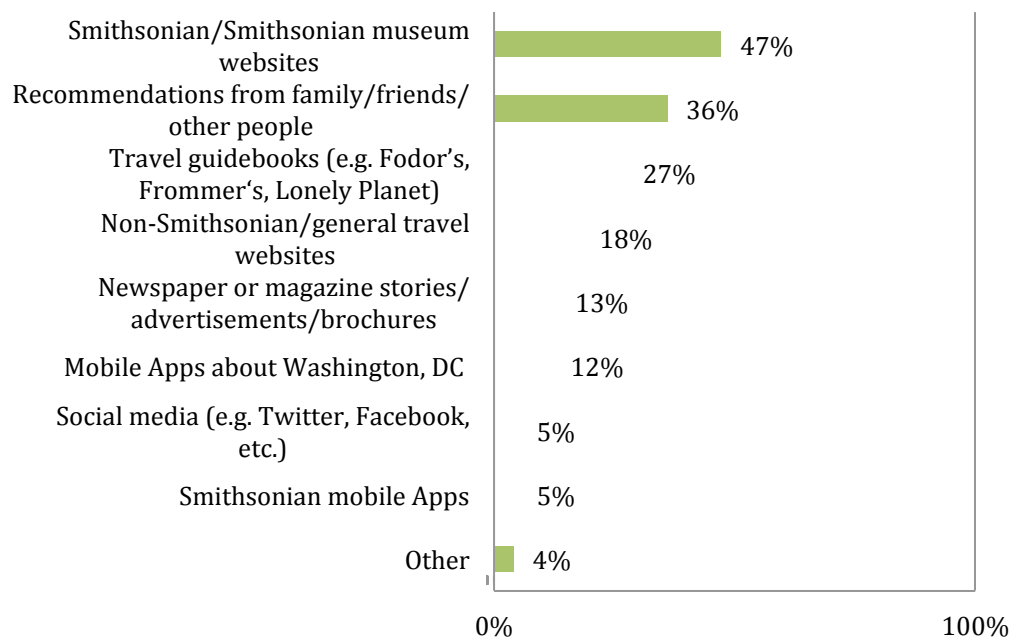
The majority of visitors (70%) planned their visit before arriving at the Smithsonian Institution.

- Among the visitors who planned their visit, the most popular resources were *Smithsonian websites* (47%), *Recommendations from people* (36%), and *Guide books* (27%). See Figure 1.

*I bought a book from Barnes and Noble myself and then a kids version for my son, so we read that, he read it himself and I read mine and we figured out what we liked and wanted to see ** (21)

Figure 1

Resources used for planning a visit to the Smithsonian



**The quotes in this report are from interviews conducted with visitors to the Castle. The numbers in brackets following each quote are the respondents' numbers in the chart in Appendix C.*

Reasons and Activities

Visitors were asked to mark three out of the nine reasons for why they entered the building.

- About one in three visitors entered the castle to seek information about *Smithsonian museums* (39%).

-

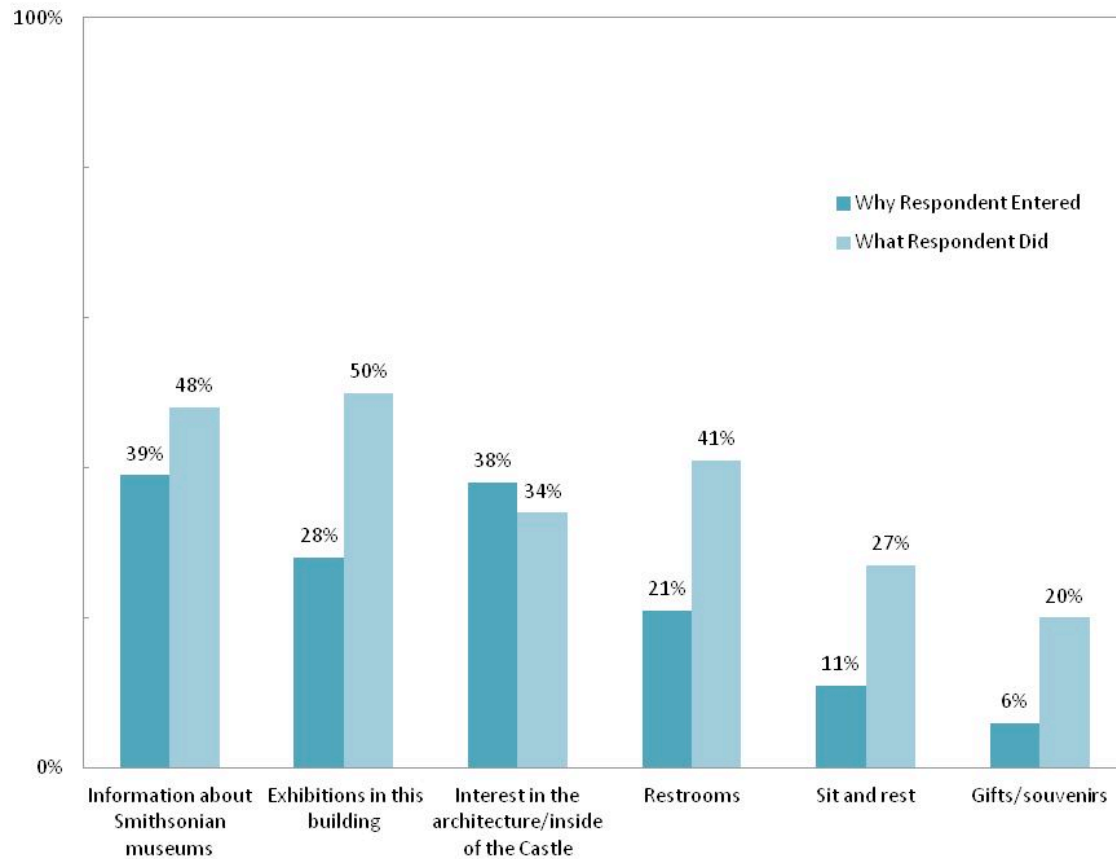
- Nearly the same amount of visitors entered the castle because they were *Interested in the Architecture/ inside of castle* (38%), *Exhibitions in this building* (28%), and *Restrooms* 21%).

- However, once inside the building visitors were more likely to see *Exhibitions in this building* (50%) and seek *Information about Smithsonian museums* (48%).

It is such a magnificent building so I just wanted to see the inside (15)

Figure 2

Why visitors entered the Castle, and what they did in the Castle



Information Desk

More than half of the visitors (55%) did not stop at the information desk (*I noticed the information desk but did not stop, 42%; I didn't notice the information desk, 13%*).

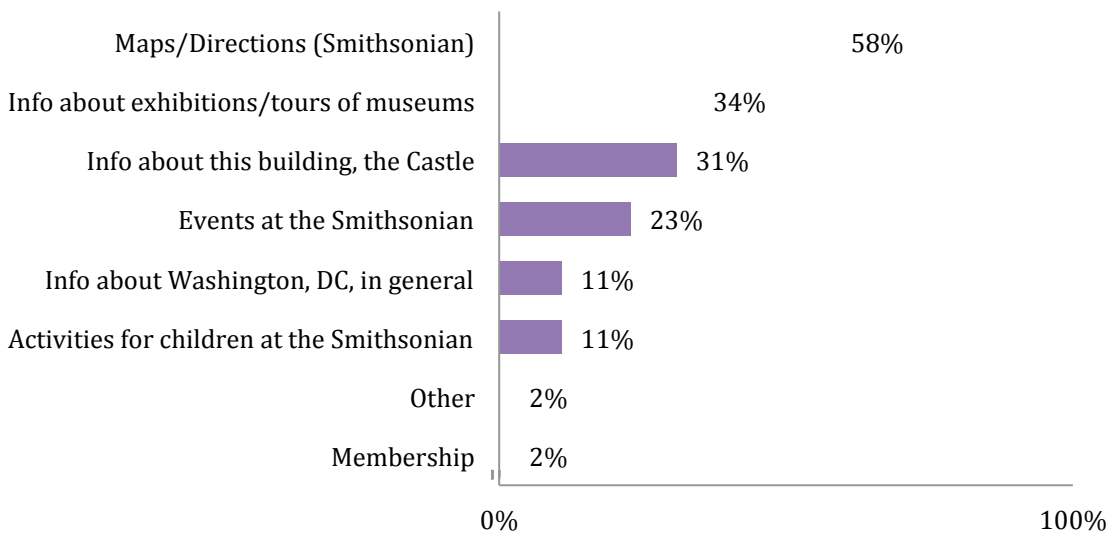
I found the information center (desk) very helpful! Every time when I visit the ladies and gentlemen there are very, very helpful... It is a very good service.
14

○ The visitors who did stop at the information desk were most interested in getting *Maps and directions* (58%).

○ Visitors who went to the information desk were also interested in finding information about *Exhibitions/tours of museums* (34%), *The Castle* (31%), and *Events at the Smithsonian* (23%). See Figure 3

Figure 3

Type of information visitors were looking for from the Information Desk



Almost all visitors (91%) received the information they were looking for.

○ The most common way visitors received this information was from *Printed Materials* (27%), and *Talking with staff at the Information Desk* (20%).

○ Visitors were less likely to receive information from *Shop/Café Staff* (2%), and *Security Staff* (4%).

Useful

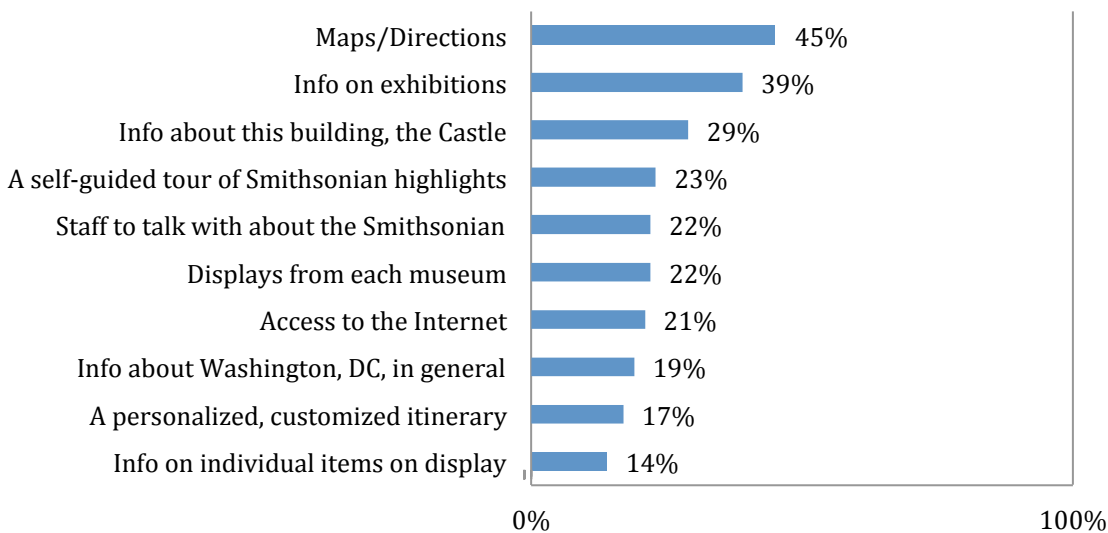
Visitors were asked what would be especially useful during their Smithsonian visit. Respondents were all allowed to check as many responses that they felt would be useful. Visitors were most interested in having more information available.

A map of the inside of each museum would be helpful so we could decide what we want to see. See for people like us that are so infrequent visitors it is a bit overwhelming and it [the SI] should help people not feel so overwhelmed and see what they want to see. (8)

- The top three responses were *Maps and Directions* (45%), *Information on Exhibitions* (39%), and *Information about this building, the Castle* (29%). See Figure 4.

Figure 4

What would be useful during a Smithsonian Visit



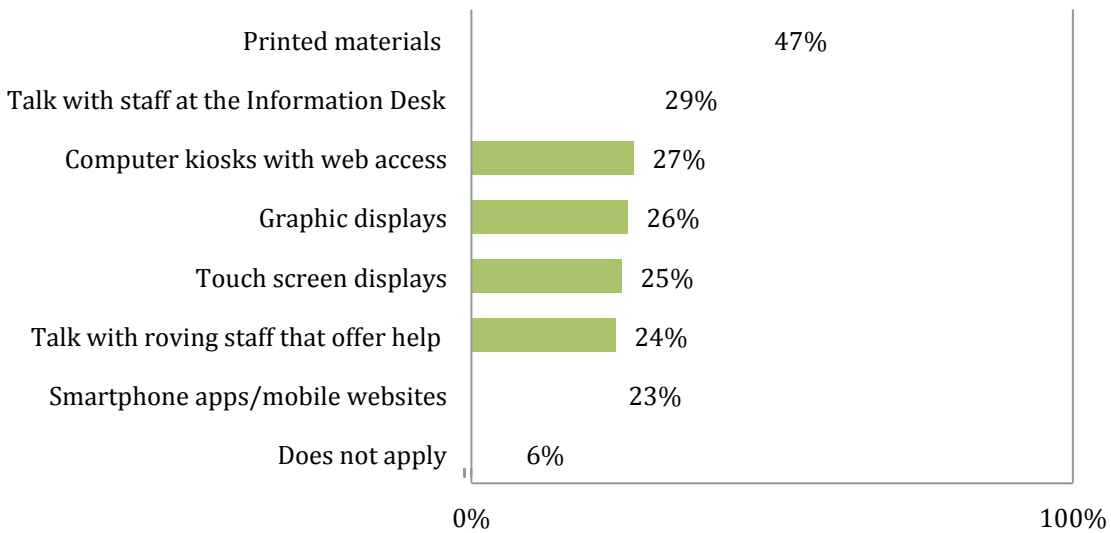
Preferred Way

In addition to what would be especially useful during their Smithsonian visit, visitors were also asked what way of getting this information they would MOST prefer to have in the Castle building. Respondents were asked to mark no more than three answers.

I like to get to get information in 2 forms: on the web before I get here and then something pocket-sized so I can put it in my pocket during the tour. (3)

- Visitors were most likely to choose *Printed materials* (47%). See Figure 5.

Figure 5
Most preferred ways to get information

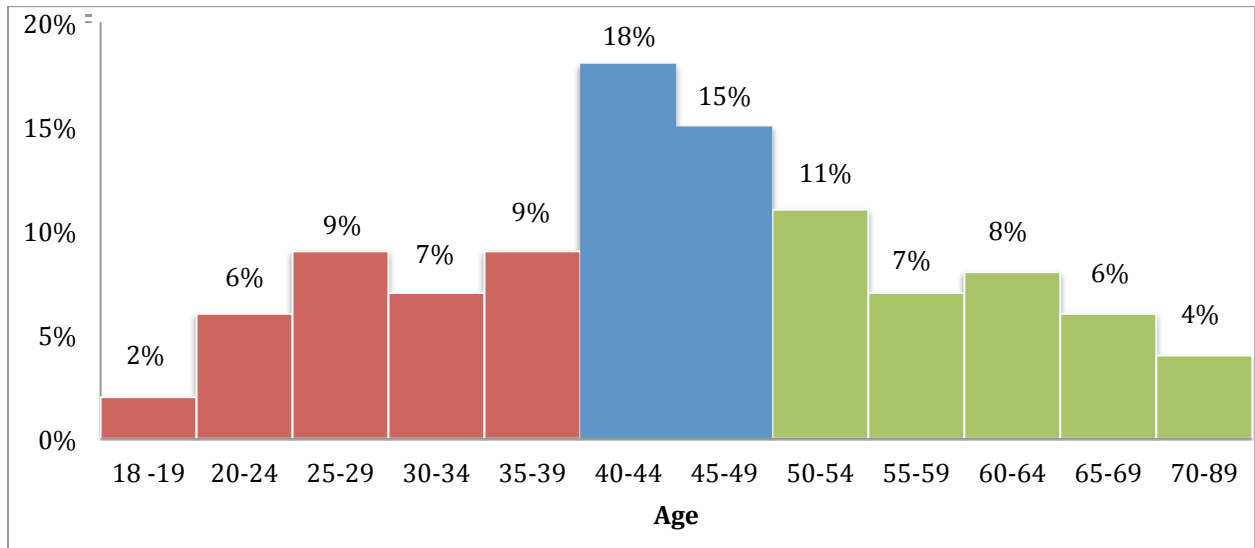


Demographic Characteristics

Age: The average age of respondents was 45 and the median age was 45.

- Respondents were nearly equally distributed among the following three age groups, 18 thru 40 (36%), 41 thru 50 (33%), 51 thru 89 (31%). See colored groups in Figure 6.

Figure 6
Respondents Age in Five-year Categories



Sex: Nearly equal numbers of women (53%) and men (49%) visited the castle.

Group Composition: Almost all respondents (88%) were visiting with at least one other person.

- Three out of four respondents (75%) were visiting the Castle with at least one other adult, and just under half of the respondents (41%) were visiting with a youth under 18.

Residence: Nine out of ten respondents live in the United States (90%).

- Most were from the Southeast (29%) and Mid-Atlantic regions (22%).
- One third of all visitors live in a 250 mile radius of the National Mall (37%).
- One in ten (10%) live in the Washington, DC, Metropolitan Area.

Findings: A Closer Look¹

Planning Ahead

The Castle visitors can be divided into two groups: the **Planners** (70%), who made an effort to plan their visit, and the **Improvisers** (30%), who did not plan in advance. Although Planners are more numerous among non-local visitors, they are more than half of the local visitors, as well (71% of non-locals; 54% of locals). They were also more likely to be with children (47% vs. 30% of Improvisers), and to be female (74% of women were Planners vs. 65% of men).

The main sources of information for these Planners were Smithsonian websites (47%), recommendations from other people (36%), and travel guidebooks (27%).

Planners were more likely than Improvisers to:

- Enter the Castle to get information on SI museums (44% vs. 26%)
- Stop at the information desk (50% vs. 35%)
 - Asking for SI maps or directions (31% vs. 16%)
 - Asking about the Castle (17% vs. 9%)
 - Asking about events (14% vs. 6%)
- Enter the Castle to see the orientation film (10% vs. 2%)
- See the Orientation Film (16% vs. 8%)

Improvisers were more likely to be alone (18% vs. 8% of Planners), and were more likely than Planners to:

- Enter the Castle to eat/drink (17% vs. 6%)
- Have no preference for how to get information (11% vs. 4% of Planners).

Planners and Improvisers were equally likely to have entered because of an interest in the Castle architecture, or to see exhibitions in the Castle, or to use the restrooms, and they were equally likely to have reported that they did those things, as well.

The Smithsonian to us is like an old friend. This building is like comfort, home. We are going to see museums but we have to come here, get our coffee, a little bite to eat...This is like home to us. (2)

Reason for Entering

Those who gave reasons for entering the castle can be divided into three groups:

- **Museum Reasons Only:** The 63% of visitors who came only because of an interest in the Castle and its contents or to get information about the Smithsonian or to see the orientation film.

¹ Statistical significance for this section is less than .01. In other words there is less than a one in a hundred chance that an association noted in this section is an accident of the sample.

- **Basic Needs Only:** The 16% of visitors who entered only in response to a basic physical need, i.e., to drink or eat, to use the restroom, or to sit and rest. Less than half of them (6% of all visitors) did anything other than satisfy their basic needs in the Castle.
- **Shop Only:** The 5% of visitors who entered only to visit the gift shop.
- **Combined Reasons:** The 16% of visitors who entered for reasons in more than one of these three categories – museum reasons, basic needs, or shopping.

We are spending two full days at the Smithsonian. We didn't plan out exactly what we were going to do so we came to see the Orientation film to find out. We were told [by a local on the train] to come see the Orientation film in the morning. We found out about the American Indian museum and the National Portrait Gallery [from the video] and it made me want to go see NPG. (8)

Especially Useful

When it comes to the matter of what would be especially useful to these visitors during their Smithsonian visit, choices could be divided into three groups:²

- **Informed** - Those who were more likely to select some combination of maps, exhibition information, information on individual items, information on the Castle, and talking to staff
- **Independent** – Those who were more likely to select some combination of self-tours, internet access to websites, and museum displays
- **Customized** – Those who selected a personalized, customized itinerary

Some of visitors' choices were directly related to why they entered the Castle:

- Those who wanted to see exhibitions in the building were less likely to think that talking to staff about the Smithsonian would be useful (14% vs. 27%).
- Those who entered because of an interest in Castle architecture were more likely to think that information about the Castle would be useful (47% vs. 18%).
- Those who entered in order to sit and rest were more likely to want a self-guided tour of the Smithsonian (47% vs. 22%).

It would be great to have a visual when you first come in, before you even get to the guards, of what's to offer here, like what you can see here in this building, even if it's just one little piece of paper... because I didn't know when we came in, what are we trying to do here.(22)

Delivery Preferences

Some delivery preferences were linked to the items that visitors thought would be useful for their visit:

- Those who wanted internet access were more likely to prefer computer kiosks with internet access

² This pattern was derived from the proximity matrix of responses, which was mapped in nine-dimensions (using PROXSCAL in SPSS 17.0) and then clustered hierarchically using Ward's Method. Information on Washington, DC, was excluded from this analysis.

(47% vs. 23%) and Smithsonian apps and mobile websites (34% vs. 21%).

- Those who wanted information about the Castle were more likely to prefer touch screens (34% vs. 21%).
- Those who wanted information on exhibitions were more likely to prefer talking with staff at the information desk (36% vs. 20%).
- Those who wanted information on individual items on display were more likely to prefer roving staff (38% vs. 22%)
- Those who wanted maps and directions were more likely to prefer printed materials (59% vs. 39%).
- Those who wanted staff to talk with about the Smithsonian were more likely to prefer talking with staff at the information desk (48% vs. 24%) and talking to roving staff (48% vs. 18%).
- Those who wanted information about Washington, DC, in general, were more likely to prefer printed materials (64% vs. 45%).

Overall preferences could be divided into two groups that were very similar to those identified above in connection with usefulness:³

- **Informed** – Those who were more likely to prefer some combination of printed materials, staff at the information desk, roving staff, and touchscreens
- **Independent** – Those who were more likely to prefer some combination of computer kiosks with internet access, smartphone apps or mobile websites, and graphic displays

Demographic Associations

Some visitors' responses show differences according to demographic characteristics, but the differences generally related more to their presence in the Castle than to their behaviors, interests, or preferences.

I've been here before and already been to air and space museum before, but again, this is a sort of 'ground zero'. You know... a good place to start. (17)

Visit Group

Those visiting alone were more likely than other visitors to:

- Not plan in advance (49% vs. 28%)
- Be repeat visitors to the Castle (55% vs. 24%)
- Enter the Castle to eat/drink (23% vs. 8%)
- Feel that information on exhibitions would be useful (56% vs. 37%)

Those visiting with other adults were more likely than other visitors to:

- Be first-time visitors to the Castle (77% vs. 57%)
- Not enter the Castle to eat/drink (7% vs. 16%)

³ This pattern was also derived using the method described in the previous note.

Those visiting with children were more likely than other visitors to:

- Plan in advance (78% vs. 64%)
- Use SI websites to plan (41% vs. 27%)
- Use non-SI websites to plan (18% vs. 9%)

Residence

International visitors were more likely than US residents to:

- Be first-time visitors to SI (81% vs. 44%)

Local visitors were more likely than other visitors to:

- Be repeat visitors to the Smithsonian (76% vs. 50%)
- Be repeat visitors to the Castle (53% vs. 25%)
- Be visiting alone (34% v. 10%)

Age

Visitors ages 40 and under were more likely than other visitors to:

- Be first-time visitors to SI (59% vs. 41%)
- Not see the orientation film (7% vs. 18%)
- Want information about Washington, DC, in general (28% vs. 14%)
- Prefer Smartphone apps/mobile websites for information (35% vs. 17%)
- Not prefer to talk with roving staff (16% vs. 29%)
- Live outside the U.S. (15% vs. 7%)

Visitors ages 41 to 50 were more likely than other visitors to:

- See exhibits in the Castle (59% vs. 46%)
- Be visiting with children (67% vs. 28%)
- Live in the U.S. (96% vs. 87%)

Visitors over age 50 were more likely than other visitors to:

- Be repeat visitors to SI (63% vs. 48%)
- Use newspapers or magazines to plan their visit (14% vs. 6%)
- See the orientation film (20% vs. 11%)
- Not prefer to use Smartphone apps or mobile websites (14% vs. 27%)
- Not be visiting with children (26% vs. 48%)

Discussion

An Information Center

The survey findings support the importance of the Castle as a place for information about the Smithsonian – its museums, exhibitions, and activities. This is especially true for the Planners, those who like to organize their visit in advance.⁴ More could be done to enhance the visibility of the information offerings in the Castle, since some failed to notice the information desk. It is also possible that the relatively low use of the orientation film might relate to its low visibility in the space.

A Museum of Its Own

The Castle also attracts visitors through its architecture and engages visitors with its exhibits. The current exhibits that span the range of the Smithsonian museums, and serve as introductions to those museums, might be evaluated and, if necessary, enhanced to that they are especially useful in this setting.

Varieties of Information Approaches

With respect to information and the ways of getting it, the study revealed two key approaches: The Informed visitors tended to seek information that is targeted or delivered through direct interaction with staff; the Independent visitors tended to seek access to information sources where they have greater freedom to explore choice options. Appreciating these two dimensions can add balance to the complete range of possibilities offered to visitors. A few want a Customized itinerary.⁵

Preferences

The study showed that visitors have a strong preference for printed materials, probably because these can be carried throughout the visit (or to a hotel for further planning, or home as a souvenir), and thus offer the greatest flexibility both in terms of availability and time. The other options for information delivery were important to roughly equal numbers of visitors, and an effective information delivery system would require a mix of all of them.

⁴ Planners constitute 70% of visitors.

⁵ The report defines these categories.

Is this your FIRST visit to the Smithsonian Institution?

Yes No -> In what YEAR was your last visit?

Which resources did you use for planning this visit to the Smithsonian?

[Mark ALL that apply]

- Does not apply, did not plan in advance
- Newspaper or magazine stories/advertisements/brochures
- Smithsonian/Smithsonian museum websites
- Non-Smithsonian/general travel websites
- Smithsonian mobile Apps
- Mobile Apps about Washington, DC
- Social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, etc.)
- Recommendations from family/friends/other people
- Travel guidebooks (e.g. Fodor's, Frommer's, Lonely Planet)
- Other: _____

Is this your FIRST visit to this building, the Smithsonian Institution Castle?

Yes No

What did you DO in this building today?

[Mark ALL that apply]

What was the MAIN reason(s) you entered this building, today?

[Mark no more than THREE (3)]

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Drink or eat | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Exhibitions in this building | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Gifts/souvenirs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Information about Smithsonian museums | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Interest in the architecture/inside of the Castle | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Orientation film about the Smithsonian | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Restrooms | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sit and rest | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

What kind of information were you looking for at the Information Desk in this building?

[Mark ALL that apply]

- I didn't notice the Information Desk
- I noticed the Information Desk, but didn't stop there
- Activities for children at the Smithsonian
- Events at the Smithsonian
- Info about this building, the Castle
- Info about exhibitions/tours of museums
- Maps/directions (Smithsonian)
- Membership
- Info about Washington, DC, in general
- Other: _____

Did you get the information you were looking for?

- Does not apply
- No Yes -> How? Printed materials
- Talk with staff at Information Desk Shop/Café staff Security staff

Which of the following would be especially useful during your Smithsonian visit?

[Mark ALL that apply]

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A personalized, customized itinerary | <input type="checkbox"/> Info on exhibitions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A self-guided tour of Smithsonian highlights | <input type="checkbox"/> Info on individual items on display |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to the Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Maps/directions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Displays from each museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff to talk with about the Smithsonian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Info about this building, the Castle | <input type="checkbox"/> Info about Washington, DC, in general |

What way of getting this information would you MOST prefer to have in this building?

[Mark no more than THREE (3)]

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer kiosks with web access | <input type="checkbox"/> Talk with staff at the Information Desk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic displays | <input type="checkbox"/> Talk with roving staff who offer help |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Printed materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Touch screen displays |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smartphone Apps/mobile websites | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Does not apply</i> |

*With whom are you visiting today?

[Mark ALL that apply]

- I am alone
- Adult(s)
- Youth under 18
- Organized group

*Where do you live?

United States, specify zip code:

Another country, specify: _____

*What is your age?

*Are you: Male Female

Thank You!!!

Ses Seg 1 2 3 C R L I Cut thru G M Intv ID

6

⁶ Original was one legal-sized sheet

Appendix B Frequency Distributions: Survey Visitors

Please Note: A total is not shown for questions marked with an asterisk (*). As they total over 100%, since respondents were asked to "Mark ALL that apply". Some totals that are shown total over 100% due to rounding (eg., 101%)

Is this your FIRST visit to the Smithsonian Institution? (96% responded)

48%	Yes	8.3	Average years since last visit
52%	No	2	Median years since last visit
Total 100%			

Visits to the Smithsonian Institution

48%	First visit
30%	Repeat visit within last two years
22%	Repeat visit after more than two years

Total 100%

***Which resources did you use for planning this visit to the Smithsonian?** [Mark ALL that apply] (97% responded)

30%	Does not apply, did not plan in advance
33%	Smithsonian/Smithsonian museum websites
25%	Recommendations from family/friends/other people
19%	Travel guidebooks (e.g. Fodor's, Frommer's, Lonely Planet)
13%	Non-Smithsonian/general travel websites
9%	Newspaper or magazine stories/advertisements/brochures
8%	Mobile Apps about Washington, DC
3%	Smithsonian mobile Apps
3%	Social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, etc.)
3%	Other

Excluding those who did not plan ahead:

***Which resources did you use for planning this visit to the Smithsonian?**

[Mark ALL that apply]

47%	Smithsonian/Smithsonian museum websites
36%	Recommendations from family/friends/other people
27%	Travel guidebooks (e.g. Fodor's, Frommer's, Lonely Planet)
18%	Non-Smithsonian/general travel websites
13%	Newspaper or magazine stories/advertisements/brochures
12%	Mobile Apps about Washington, DC
5%	Smithsonian mobile Apps
5%	Social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, etc.)
4%	Other

Is this your FIRST visit to this building, the Smithsonian Institution Castle? (96% responded)

72% Yes
28% No
Total 100%

***What did you DO in this building today?** (93% responded)
[Mark all that apply]

50% Exhibitions in this building
48% Information about Smithsonian museums
41% Restrooms
34% Interest in the architecture/inside of the Castle
27% Sit and rest
20% Gifts/souvenirs
17% Drink or eat
14% Orientation film about the Smithsonian
3% Other

***What was the MAIN reason(s) you entered this building, today?** (73% responded)
[Mark no more than THREE (3)]

39% Information about Smithsonian museums
38% Interest in the architecture/inside of the Castle
28% Exhibitions in this building
21% Restrooms
11% Sit and rest
9% Drink or eat
8% Orientation film about the Smithsonian
6% Gifts/souvenirs
3% Other

***If you went to the Information Desk in this building, what kind of information were you looking for?** (97% responded)
[Mark no more than THREE (3)]

42% I noticed the Information Desk, but didn't stop there
27% Maps/Directions (Smithsonian)
16% Info about exhibitions/tours of museums
14% Info about this building, the Castle
13% I didn't notice the Information Desk
11% Events at the Smithsonian
5% Activities for children at the Smithsonian
5% Info about Washington, DC, in general
1% Membership
1% Other

Excluding those who did not notice or did not stop:

***If you went to the Information Desk in this building, what kind of information were you looking for?**

[Mark no more than THREE (3)]

- 58% Maps/Directions (Smithsonian)
- 34% Info about exhibitions/tours of museums
- 31% Info about this building, the Castle
- 23% Events at the Smithsonian
- 11% Activities for children at the Smithsonian
- 11% Info about Washington, DC, in general
- 2% Membership
- 2% Other

***Did you get the information you were looking for?** (97% responded)

[Mark all that apply]

- 44% Does not apply
- 5% No
- 51% Yes
- Total 100%

How?

- 27% Printed materials
- 20% Talk with staff at Information Desk
- 2% Shop/Café staff
- 4% Security Staff

Excluding those for whom it did not apply:

Did you get the information you were looking for?

- 9% No
- 91% Yes
- Total 100%

***Which of the following would be especially useful during your Smithsonian**

[Mark ALL that apply] (91% responded)

- 45% Maps/Directions
- 39% Info on exhibitions
- 29% Info about this building, the Castle
- A self-guided tour of Smithsonian
- 23% highlights
- 22% Displays from each museum
- 22% Staff to talk with about the Smithsonian
- 21% Access to the Internet
- 19% Info about Washington, DC, in general
- 17% A personalized, customized itinerary
- 14% Info on individual items on display

***What way of getting this information would you MOST prefer to have in this building?** [Mark no more than THREE (3)] (93% responded)

- 47% Printed materials
- 29% Talk with staff at the Information Desk
- 27% Computer kiosks with web access
- 26% Graphic displays
- 25% Touch screen displays
- 24% Talk with roving staff that offer help
- 23% Smartphone apps/mobile websites
- 6% Does not apply

***With whom are you visiting today?** [Mark ALL that apply] (98% responded)

- 75% Adult(s)
- 41% Youth under 18
- 12% I am alone
- 3% Organized group

Are you: (96% responded)

- 53% Female
- 47% Male
- Total 100%

What is your age? (96% responded)

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|----|-------------|
| Age in Five-year Categories | | 45 | Average age |
| 2% | 18 thru 19 | 45 | Median age |
| 6% | 20 thru 24 | | |
| 9% | 25 thru 29 | | |
| 7% | 30 thru 34 | | |
| 9% | 35 thru 39 | | |
| 18% | 40 thru 44 | | |
| 15% | 45 thru 49 | | |
| 11% | 50 thru 54 | | |
| 7% | 55 thru 59 | | |
| 8% | 60 thru 64 | | |
| 6% | 65 thru 69 | | |
| 4% | 70 thru 89 | | |
| Total 102% | | | |

- Age in Three Categories
- 36% 18 thru 40
 - 33% 41 thru 50
 - 31% 51 thru 89
 - Total 100%

Age Grouped by Generations

7% Silents (born 1925-45)
15% Leading Edge Boomers (born 1946-55)
20% Trailing Edge Boomers (born 1956-64)
40% Gen X (born 1965-81)
19% Gen Y (born 1982-95)
Total 101%

Where do you live?

(97% responded)

90% United States
10% Other country
Total 100%

Residence Radius from the Mall

4% 0-5 miles
4% 5-10 miles
4% 10-20 miles
5% 20-40 miles
4% 40-100 miles
16% 100-250 miles
54% Other U.S.
10% International
Total 101%

Residence Region

9% Washington, DC, Metro Area
29% Southeast
22% Mid-Atlantic
14% Midwest
New
3% England
4% Mountain Plains
7% West
4% Country other than U.S.
9% Unspecified U.S.
Total 101%

Appendix C
Characteristics of Respondents Interviewed by OP&A Staff

Number	Gender	Approximate Age	Group Composition	Where from	Reason For Visit
1	Female	40	School group	New York	Interested in the building
2	Female	60	Couple	Virginia	To use amenities (e.g. restroom, shop, café)
3	Female	40	Grandmother & girl, age 4	South Carolina	Interested in the building
4	Male	50	Alone	Massachusetts	To use amenities (e.g. restroom, shop, café)
5	Female, Male	40	Couple	Ohio	To get information about the SI
6	Female	40, 18	Mother, father, son age 18	Illinois	To get information about the SI
7	Female, Male	20	Couple	from "the West"	To use amenities (e.g. restroom, shop, café)
8	2 Females, 1 Male	40, 40, 12	Mother, father and daughter, age 12	Arizona	To get information about the SI
9	Female	20	Alone		To get information about the SI
10	2 Females	20	Friends	Texas	Other (museum visit – thought that the Castle is the SI)
11	Female, Male	40	Couple		Interested in the building, to get information about the SI

12	Male	40	Couple	Arizona	Interested in the building
13	2 Males	20, 40s	Father, son	Kentucky	To get information about the SI
14	2 Females	70s	Friends	Washington, Ireland	Interested in the building, to get information about the SI
15	2 Females	50, 20	Mother, daughter	New York	To get information about the SI
16	2 Females, 1 Male	40, 40, 12	Mother, Father , daughter age 12	Arkansas	Interested in the building
17	Female, Male	50, 50	Couple	California	To get information about the SI
18	Female, Male	40, 40	Couple	Delaware	Interested in the building
19	2 Females	18, 18	Friends	Louisiana	Interested in the building
20	2 Females	50, 50	School group	Pennsylvania	Interested in the building
21	Female	30	Mother, father, son age 10	New Hampshire	To use amenities (e.g. restroom, shop, café)
22	Female, Male	70	Couple	Michigan	To use amenities (e.g. restroom, shop, café)
23	3 females	30, 30, 60	Couple and one's mother	South Carolina, Virginia	To get information about the SI 3 day vacation
24	Female, Male	40	Mother, father, son age 10	Missouri	To get information about the SI

Relevant Quotes from Interviews with Castle Visitors:

Advanced Planning

- We finalized our plans this morning using our Fodder's guide book. The guidebook recommends that we start our day here in the Castle and catch the orientation video. That's where we learned about the American Indian museum. It wasn't built yet when we were here last so we weren't aware of that. 5
- *OP&A: How did you plan your visit? Did you go on the Smithsonian website or use other materials?*

I bought a book from Barnes and Noble myself and then a kids version for my son, so we read that, he read it himself and I read mine and we figured out what we liked and wanted to see. And in the book it recommended getting a "Planning Your Visit" from the Smithsonian. So I contacted the Smithsonian and they sent that to me.- 21

What were you particularly interested in seeing on your visit, both SI and other points?

The Capitol, something of the White House, National Air and Space, the Insect Zoo, all the memorials, we haven't seen those yet, the Arts and industries Building...

Which is closed by the way.

Oh it is closed, okay see it wasn't clear whether we just had to go in a different way.

It's been closed for at least five years now to the public due to the renovation.

Aww [to husband] it's closed and it's been closed. We were in here this morning and came back in to use the restroom but we went out the other way so we could get in the other way. Now see I thought I had planned well but apparently... I don't think it was in the book ... I think it was written in 2009 or 2010 so I thought...- 21

Reasons for Entering Castle

- This is a gathering point, a starting point. I used to come in a couple times of year and this was the starting point, you get off the Smithsonian metro and come here. -2
- We have been to many of the museums already and this is really the last one we were going to and it was pretty much the uniqueness of the architecture that drew us here...I think we are kind of tired from going to all the museums and this was a little anti-climatic honestly. If this was your first stop it might tell you where you want to go but having been to most of them already it's a small piece of it...If this was maybe earlier in our trip we could have seen what was in all the different museums and to make decisions and plan out our trip. It would be a good place for

the Smithsonian to play up what's available and the models of where things are would help people plan their visit. - 16

- I've been here before and already been to air and space museum before, but again, this is a sort of 'ground zero'. You know... a good place to start. - 17
- Through the docent tour our thought about the Smithsonian have changed. I mean the thing that we recalled was that the Natural History Museum as the Smithsonian. Now we know there are more than 10 museums and the fact that there's an information building. And I liked the exhibition here and it will be really helpful for other people to start their visit from here. We didn't know this was here until last visit. We've been to DC for about 4 times and didn't know until last time. - 18

Castle Activities

- The Smithsonian to us is like an old friend. This building is like comfort, home. We are going to see museums but we have to come here, get our coffee, a little bite to eat...This is like home to us. To show the age of what's here and how long it's been here, this building simplifies it. - 2
- We are spending two full days at the Smithsonian. We didn't plan out exactly what we were going to do so we came to see the Orientation film to find out. We were told [by a local on the train] to come see the Orientation film in the morning. We found out about the American Indian museum and the National Portrait Gallery [from the video] and it made me want to go see NPG.-8
- Maybe that's what this place is... it sort of gives you an idea where to go and who do you ask and where should I go from here... Like maybe this should be the first place to visit (when I came). - 12
- I found the information center (desk) very helpful! Every time when I visit the ladies and gentlemen there are very, very helpful... It is a very good service. -14
- *OP&A: Has anything in the building helped you in terms of what you want to see or what you expected?*
It kind of compounds everything down and kind of shows what the rest of the Smithsonian will show us- 19
- That would help if some things had a background story, maybe we wouldn't be able to pick up on. A lot of the things in that room (entry hall to Commons), what was it the armchairs and stuff and the chandelier I think it was...

You would have liked it to have...

A little more information. It gave you general information, but not really a lot of it, not really explaining the big part of it – what makes it important.- 19

- Yeah, it's not clear what to actually do, because you walk into this main area and you look around a little bit... and this is the second time I've been here and I've done it both times... I don't really know where to go or what to do, so maybe some information of like where or what, signs or something...

What kind of information are you looking for?

If there's anything in there to do other than just walk in and walk through. -22

Forms of Getting Information

- An app on the smart phone would be great. It would have helped us plan a little more. We knew what we wanted to see in general but we were planning it out in the car ride on the way to Washington, DC. 1
- The only other thing I just thought of was a kiosk of arranging a docent – having them more visible, somebody that can show you the places. I saw the sign that said 'next tour meeting at 2:00" over there – maybe something more visible, more energized, to get people pumped up about pieces of information. I love trivia, I don't know, maybe more of a game... That's what I would find interesting. -21
- Maybe a visual when you first come in, before you even get to the guards, of what's to offer here, like what you can see here in this building, even if it's just one little piece of paper that says in the layout you can see it... because I didn't know when we came in, what are we trying to do here other than see a little bit of the map.- 22
- *OP&A: The purpose of this building is to help orient your visit, so some other ideas are ... would you use a computer kiosk...*

I don't know because the amount of people that come through here, I think you wouldn't have time or there would really be a big line and people just kind of move on. For the mass of people that come through here – and I know you're trying to conserve paper – but really think that ... and you could have a recycle thing sitting out and they can recycle it.

Printed materials such as maps and brochures – you're nodding yes, that would be helpful?

How about a slide show? Then if you've got a lot of people around the visual... it would have to be up on a big flat screen. -23

Interests/needs

- A map of the inside of each museum would be helpful so we could decide what we want to see. See for people like us that are so infrequent visitors it is a bit overwhelming and it [the SI] should help people not feel so overwhelmed and see what they want to see. - 8
- I planned on the internet. It's so much information that I felt like I needed get here and see the scope of everything, see how big everything is. Seeing it is a whole different thing, obviously in person than in line... I knew the buildings were enormous and I think I didn't realize how enormous they are. . I guess it's a matter of popping in but the distances are big so you kind of need to know where you are going... All the information is out there but it's just so much information. I don't know what to expect when I get to the museum – 9
- You should publicize that you have an App. I am sure there is some advertisement, but I haven't seen it. - 10
- You know, one thing I would like is... the distance of various museums from the information center and directions would be very helpful. I know you can go to the information, but to see... you know, a big map about the location... the location of the various museums in relation to the Castle. What direction, north, east, south, west... how long it will take you by foot... It's much better to have a visual aid. You know? At the airport sometimes they tell you 'it takes you 15 minutes to the gate', ... so that would be a helpful information to plan your journey. -14
- It might be nice if someone is here for just one day – a day trip – highlights of the various museums, a crash course, these are the highlights... Last year when we visited friends in Orlando, we were there for 2 days, they go to Disney World so much that we were able to leave in the morning, be there from 8:00 am 'til midnight, and hit all the highlights of the Park because they knew it so well. Whereas you go into a lot of museums, you want to get the highlights, a taste of them, that is something that would be helpful. What are some of the main exhibits in the Smithsonian that would be a highlight?- 20
- *OP&A: Any other ideas for how this building could serve you more? One suggestion was to have more people walking around to talk with*

What I saw when I was in England, they had us pick up these... I don't know what they were but you held it to your ear and it explained ... I think we were in Winston

Churchill offices in WWI – he left it when the war ended, cigarettes were still sitting on the ashtrays. They had the thing there, we picked one up, and we all took our time looking at each one of these. That was something.

You felt it enriched the experience?

Yes, because when you are reading you can't see, because you have to wear reading glasses all the time.- 20

- *OP&A: Besides SI [information] would you like more centralized information for DC?*

It's not that there's a lack of information but for me there was a lack, especially in the book, of – this is what you need, you know, a little bit more urgency, important stuff. You can't just buy a Metro farecard whenever you want, it doesn't open until 8:00 am. It will slow you down if you want to get going.

Husband: [a map with] most of the attractions in DC and then two overlays, one being the subway, because you can't always tell where the subway is running to, if you had an overlay of the lines you could say 'we're here so we need to take the Orange over to here'. Another one would be the bus line, if we want to jump on the bus, it might not be as easy because there's a ton of them, but at least it would give you a broad idea of how hard would it be to get from one spot to another – see two overlays with just the lines on it. There's three different maps but they don't always... you have to piece them together and hold them up to the light. That to me would be very helpful. -21