

**EXPECTATIONS AND REVELATIONS: CHILDREN DISCUSS CONDUCTING
RESEARCH DURING A MULTI-DAY SCHOOL EXCURSION**

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University of Pittsburgh, 2018

This study explores children’s experiences as researchers on a multi-day school excursion. *Co-research*, or engaging children as full collaborators in a research study, incorporates two main ideas: listening to children’s voices and empowering children as autonomous social actors. This study analyzes children’s descriptions of the research process, conducting research, and being researchers. This study is a small offshoot of a larger study that explores children’s experiences as tourists at *sites of painful heritage*, including potentially evocative destinations like memorials, cemeteries, and sites of terror attacks. Participants included 59 male and female eighth grade students, aged 13 to 15 years. University researchers joined these students on their annual multi-day school excursion from “Midwest Town” to Washington, DC, in May 2016. Adult researchers observed students and made notes with handheld recorders, collected responses to post-visit comment sheets, and engaged them in informal small-group interviews, or *research conversations*. In addition, the teenagers were provided with loaner iPads, with which pairs or triads took photographs and added descriptions. Two weeks after the excursion ended, the students also responded to a written prompt. For the current study, data sets include the initial research conversation, which took place immediately after the students’ first data collection experience, and the post-excursion comment. Qualitative data analysis followed the principles

presented by Erickson (1985, 1996, 2004) and Ravitch and Riggan (2012). Trustworthiness was confirmed using methods from Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Richards (2003). Findings revealed that young co-researchers conceptualized all phases of the research process, even parts in which they were not involved. In addition, they expected research to empower them as social actors who contributed meaning and exercised autonomy. Young co-researchers' revelations after the study indicated that many felt empowered, and they felt that their voices were heard. Yet some also commented about the work of research, a finding not yet fully explored in the literature. Implications for those who want to research with children address research competence, power differentials, compensation, and exploitation. Implications for tourism researchers address lack of interest in children, need for specialized theories and methods, and complications of context at sites of painful heritage.

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which my interdisciplinary background and interests made sense and had value. With her guidance, I have grown both as a researcher and as a writer.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

What does it mean for adults and children to truly collaborate as researchers? This study explores the research experience of middle school students on a multi-day school excursion, examining their relationship with the research process, and their descriptions of conducting research and being researchers. This initial chapter introduces the concept and the theory behind collaborative research, or *co-research* with children. Synthesizing prior theory, this chapter presents a model of co-research with children, upon which the literature review and study then rely.

1.1 CONCEPT OF ADULT/CHILD CO-RESEARCH

Co-research developed as a theoretical method during the later decades of the twentieth century, as researchers moved away from traditional methods toward more participatory approaches. Traditionally, research about children's lives occurs through the perspective of the adult researcher, who: 1) generates the topic of interest, 2) chooses methods, and 3) selects child participants, rendering children as subjects or objects of research (Christensen & James, 2008; Einarsdóttir, 2007; Lund, Helgeland, & Kovac, 2016; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008). In recent decades, however, a shift in social sciences research has focused on research *with* and *for*

children, rather than research *on* children (Christensen & James, 2008; Einarsdóttir, 2007; Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008; Kellett, 2005; Punch, 2002).

Some researchers attribute this shift to two major influences. First, developments in both sociocultural theory and childhood studies highlighted the ways in which childhood is constructed and reconstructed: not for children, but by children (see Vygotsky, 1978; James & Prout, 1997; Merewether & Fleet, 2013). While the perspectives of sociocultural and childhood studies differ, both fields position children as social actors, capable of autonomy and of contributing their own opinions and ideas (Merewether & Fleet, 2013). Second, the 1989 United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child (UNCRC) identified certain rights of children, including the following: to remain unharmed, to non-discrimination, to express views and feelings, and to be heard. In addition, this oft-cited document noted that children are capable of forming their own views in accordance with their age and maturity; they have the right to freedom of expression, including information seeking and imparting; and they have the right to rest, leisure, and play (United Nations General Assembly, 1989).

Now considered a watershed in the development of child-centered research, the Convention initiated a research movement to “listen to the child” (Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008, p. 12) and to provide the child some level of autonomy when involved in research (Alderson, 2008; Merewether & Fleet, 2013). Proponents of this movement have noted that children possess a singular perspective and unique knowledge about their experiences (Alderson, 2004; Docherty & Sandelowski, 1999; Kellett, 2005; Mayall, 2008; Scott, 2008). As Scott (2008) put it, “the best people to provide information on the child’s perspective, actions, and attitudes are children themselves” (p. 88). In research, this has manifested in participatory research practices

with children, some researchers going so far as to engage children as researchers, either directing their own projects or of an equal collaborative standing with adults, i.e., *co-research*.

One of the earliest models of children's engagement in research, Hart's (1992) ladder of participation, extended from the depths on non-participation to the heights of engagement as researchers. The lowest rungs, namely "manipulation," "decoration," and "tokenism," led to "adult-initiated, shared decisions with children," "child-initiated and directed," and finally "child-initiated, shared decisions with adults" (Hart, 1992, p. 8). More recently, Shier (2001) proposed a pathways to participation model, which claimed to assess the appropriate degree of participation for each specific task. Children's comfort and the situation have also been found to influence level of participation (Kirby, Lanyon, Cronin, & Sinclair, 2003). Adult researchers must remember that every research situation is different, as is every child.

Expanding on prior models, Christensen and Prout (2002) and Pinter (2014) elaborated the differences between children as non-participating objects or subjects versus the engaged social actors/ active participants or co-researchers. With children as the objects or subjects of adult-directed research, at best they may experience what Robinson and Kellett (2004) call a "pretense of shared work" (p. 86). Active participation, on the other hand, attempts to reflect child agendas, listens to children's expressions and emotions, and negotiates research tools with children (Christensen & Prout, 2002; Pinter, 2014; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008). While still developing as a research paradigm, engaging children as co-researchers takes an additional step beyond active participation, empowering children as full and equal research partners with adults (Christensen & Prout, 2002; Pinter, 2014).

The two main ideas of co-research, then, include listening to children’s voices and empowering children to collaborate as autonomous social actors (Alderson, 2008; Christensen & Prout, 2002; Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Pinter, 2014; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008).

While co-research is well established in theory, few studies featuring adult/child co-research collaborations have been published (Kim, 2016; Lundy, McEvoy, & Byrne, 2011; Smith, Monaghan, & Broad, 2002). The dearth of adult/child co-researched studies means that co-research collaborations have rarely been demonstrated in practice. Without demonstrations of adult/child co-research collaborations, it may be difficult for adult researchers to proceed. Yet, theoretical literature provides strategies for co-research that may be applied to adult/child research collaborations. Below, I introduce a conceptual model of co-research with children, based upon these strategies. For this conceptual model and the review of the literature, I define *children* as individuals under the age of 18, or still in school.

1.2 STRATEGIES FOR CO-RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN

According to co-research theory, how might child co-researchers engage with the research process? According to Jones (2004), “all stages of a research project potentially present opportunities for the involvement of the child-researcher” (p. 117). Using prior theorists’ ideals, the following four-part model provides some strategies for co-research with children across the research process. This model is presented graphically as Figure 1 and in the following text.

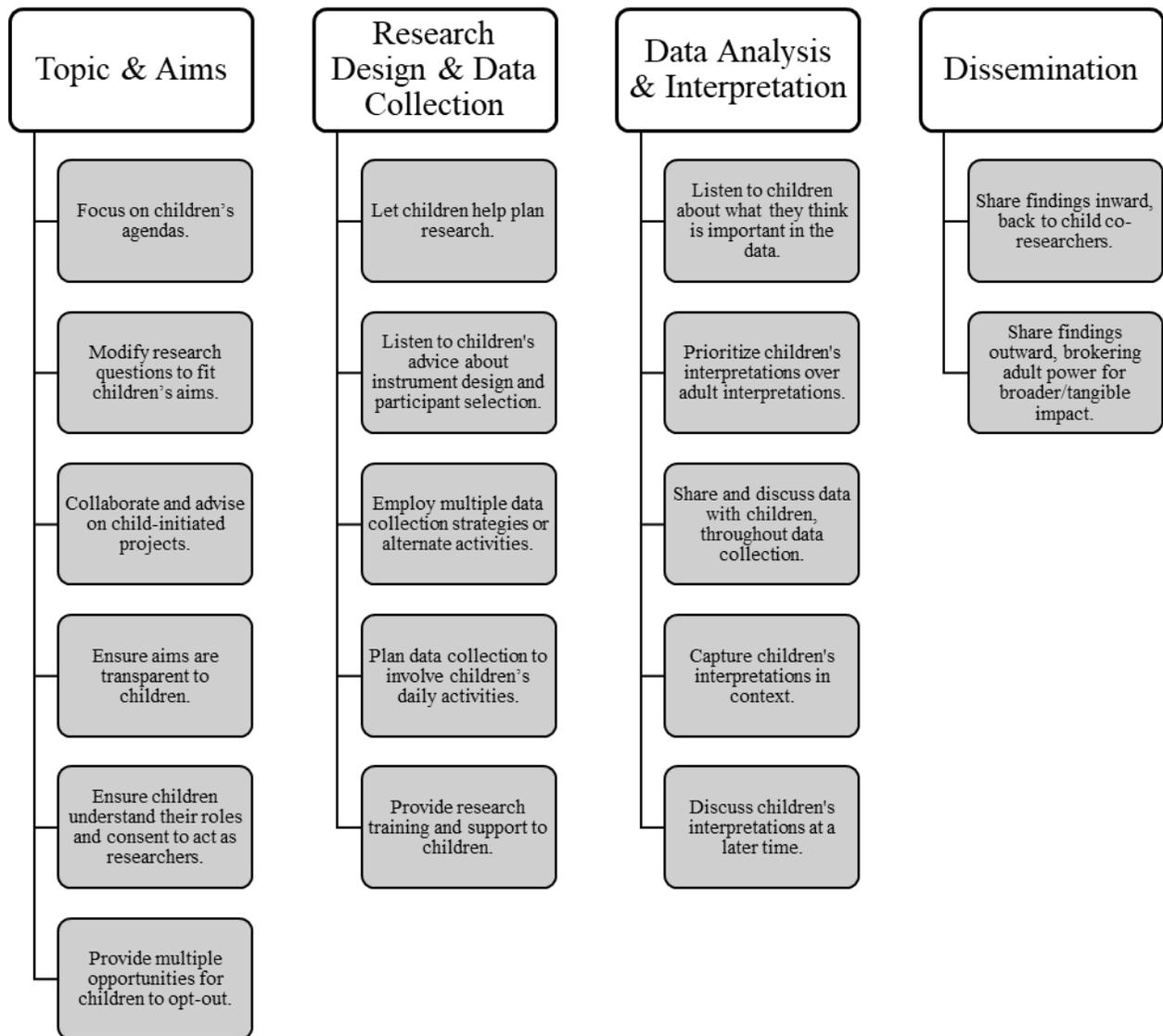


Figure 1. Conceptual Model for Co-Research with Children

1.2.1 Topic and Aims

The topic may embrace a sincere focus on the children's agenda. Adult researchers may modify or adjust their research questions, if necessary, to fit the children's aims. In some studies, the project may be child-initiated. The study's aims may be transparent to children. Children may understand their roles and consent to act as researchers, with an awareness that they may opt-out. Adult researchers may gain and regain children's consent throughout the process (Christensen & Prout, 2002; Einarsdóttir, 2007; Hart, 1992; Jones, 2004; Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Pinter, 2014; Pinter & Zandian, 2014; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008).

1.2.2 Research Design and Data Collection

Children may have a hand in planning research. Children may have influential input in areas such as instrument design and participant selection. The research project may employ multiple data collection strategies or alternative activities. Data collection may involve children's daily activities, like game playing and usual social interactions, rather than contrived settings. Adult researchers may provide research training and support to children (Einarsdóttir, 2007; Jones, 2004; Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Pinter, 2014; Pinter & Zandian, 2014).

1.2.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Children may offer suggestions or volunteer ideas about what is important in the data. Interpretation could minimize adult ideas and maximize children's agendas. Adult and child researchers may share and discuss data throughout the data collection process. Children's

interpretations may be captured in context, and possibly discussed again later (Einarsdóttir, 2007; Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Pinter, 2014; Pinter & Zandian, 2014).

1.2.4 Dissemination

Children may receive some version of the reported findings. Together, adult and child-researchers discuss the findings and their broader implications (Alderson, 2008; Christensen & Prout, 2002).

1.3 INTRODUCING THE CURRENT STUDY

This study explores one group of children's experiences as researchers during a multi-day school excursion. *Co-research*, or engaging children as full collaborators in a research study, incorporates two main ideas: listening to children's voices and empowering children as autonomous social actors. For this study, the children were between the ages of 13 and 15, and they are from this point forward referred to as adolescents, eighth graders, students, teenagers, young people, or youth. This study analyzes these teenagers' descriptions of the research process, conducting research, and being researchers, also called *co-researchers*. This study is a small offshoot of a larger study that explores children's experiences as tourists at *sites of painful heritage*, including potentially evocative destinations like memorials, cemeteries, and sites of terror attacks. Participants included 59 male and female eighth grade students, aged 13 to 15 years. University researchers joined these students on their annual multi-day school excursion from "Midwest Town" to Washington, DC, in May 2016. Adult researchers observed the

teenagers and made notes with handheld recorders, collected responses to post-visit comment sheets, and engaged them in informal small-group interviews, or *research conversations*. In addition, students were provided with loaner iPads, with which pairs or triads took photographs and added descriptions. Two weeks after the excursion ended, students also responded to a written prompt. For the current study, data sets include the initial research conversation, which took place immediately after the young co-researchers' first data collection experience, and the post-excursion comment. Qualitative data analysis followed the principles presented by Erickson (1985, 1996, 2004) and Ravitch and Riggan (2012). Trustworthiness was confirmed using methods from Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Richards (2003). Findings revealed that the young researchers conceptualized all phases of the research process, even aspects in which they were not involved. In addition, they expected research to empower them as social actors who contributed meaning and exercised autonomy. The adolescents' revelations after the study indicated that many felt empowered, and they felt that their voices were heard. Yet some also commented about the work of research, a finding not yet fully explored in the literature. Implications for those who want to research with children address research competence, power differentials, compensation, and exploitation. Implications for tourism researchers address lack of interest in children, need for specialized theories and methods, and complications of context at sites of painful heritage.

As an adult/child research collaboration that took place during a multi-day school excursion, this study was designed to fill gaps within the co-research and the tourism literature. In this study, adult researchers collaborated with their young counterparts during the research design and data collection phase of the study. Yet, in the process of collaborating with young co-researchers, we adopted strategies present within several phases of the research study.

Specifically, under the topic and aims and research design and data collection phases, we provided training to students about the study's aims, their research roles, and consent. We also offered young co-researchers multiple opportunities to opt-out of research activities and multiple data collection activities. Before undertaking this study, I conducted a review of co-researched studies in the literature, which is presented in Chapter 2.

2.0 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

As previously noted, co-research remains mostly theoretical (Kim, 2016; Lundy et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2002). In order to gather as many relevant studies as possible, I searched the social sciences literature for studies in which children were given the title of “researcher,” “co-researcher,” or similar. These terms served as signifiers that the studies were designed for children to take on research roles. Using the model presented in Chapter 1, I evaluated these studies for use of the strategies for co-research as presented in the model. This chapter begins by describing the aims and method of this review. Then, it provides an overall look at the literature, dividing findings into the categories presented in the conceptual model: a) topic and aims, b) research design and data collection, c) data analysis and interpretation, and d) dissemination. Following the findings is a discussion section which is organized in a similar manner.

2.1 AIMS OF THIS LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overall survey of the current state of co-research methods with children in the social sciences. This review includes studies that identify children as research collaborators during some part of the research process. This review differs from prior reviews because: 1) it compares prior theory-based strategies for co-research to studies that claim to engage children as researchers; and 2) it explores the adult/child research collaboration across

the research process. This review asks the following questions of the literature: a) In what ways have studies that identify children as research collaborators exemplified the strategies for co-research presented in the model? and b) In what areas of the research process have adult researchers struggled to put into practice the co-research strategies?

I excluded studies of children who were sick or disabled to an extent that might render them unable to fully engage in research, those who were imprisoned, homeless, victimized by war or abuse, otherwise traumatized, or in a government-sponsored system such as foster care. Because of the scarcity of studies featuring children as researchers, I included young and older children (up to age 18, or still in school). I also included studies across the social sciences. For clarity, I refer to these children who conduct research in collaboration with adults as *young researchers* or *co-researchers*.

2.2 METHOD OF THIS LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the purpose of this analysis is to explore children's engagement as co-researchers, I only included studies that specifically identified children as research collaborators or co-researchers with adults during the research process. I collected studies using several methods. First, I searched two broad, social sciences-rich library databases (Academic Search Premier and ProQuest) for terms such as "child researcher" or "co-research" in proximity to "children." Along the way, I scrutinized the studies I found, noting and retrieving additional applicable research papers. As I read the studies, I also noted the terms "child-led research" and "protagonist" relating to children conducting research. I added these terms to my search. I also repeated this search in Google Scholar, where I created alerts that notified me each time a newly

published study matched my search. Google Scholar allowed me to conduct a *federated search*: one in which I simultaneously searched multiple specialized library databases within my institution and across the Internet at large (see Dyas-Correia, Maneiro, Boyd, Pugh, & Cervone, 2015; Rubenstein, McCain, & Boulden, 2017). In addition, as I retrieved studies from databases, I noted articles suggested by the databases and retrieved any that appeared to match my research. In addition, I searched for articles by authors for whom young researchers seemed to make a focus or line of research. Finally, I used the “Cited by” feature in Google Scholar to find applicable studies that cited the ones that I retrieved. In order to analyze these studies, I used the strategies for co-research with children described in the introduction.

To organize and enhance my analysis, I used spreadsheet software, on which I indicated whether a study provided examples of any of the strategies. I indicated *Y* for each strategy that a study clearly employed. I indicated *N* if it was clear that the study employed a co-research strategy not contained in the model, or if the study detailed how adult researchers considered a co-research strategy in the model and discarded it. These *N* studies provide negative cases (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014), presented in the discussion section. Finally, I left the indication cell empty if the study did not clearly provide an example of a certain co-research strategy.

It is worth noting that of the 19 studies in this review, the majority (15) utilized qualitative methods alone. Three studies employed both qualitative and quantitative methods (see Cheshire & Edwards, 1991; Ergler, 2011; Porter et al., 2010). Only the child-led study presented by Kellett, Forrest, Dent, and Ward (2004) employed quantitative analysis techniques: simple calculations of questionnaire responses.

2.3 ANALYSIS OF PRIOR LITERATURE

This analysis begins with a table of studies exemplifying the strategies for co-research, followed by further analysis in the following sections. The following sections are organized by phase of the research process represented: topic and aims, research design and data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and dissemination.

2.3.1 Studies Exemplifying Co-Research with Children

Table 1 represents the studies selected for this review. As shown in Table 1, studies represented a variety of research topics, age ranges of children, and settings. Also evident from the table, several studies employed strategies within all four stages of the model. In the sections following the table, I present a deeper analysis of studies included in this review.

Table 1. Studies Featuring Co-Research Strategies with Children across the Research Process

Authors	Topic	Ages	Setting	Area of Research Process Exemplifying Co-Research Strategies with Children ^a
Chen et al., 2010	Evaluation of a nonprofit after school program	12-15	Girls Inc. affiliates across the United States	T, R, Da, Di
Cheshire & Edwards, 1991	Child responses to linguistic diversity	Various	Public schools in United Kingdom	R
Clark, 2007	Child perspectives of the outdoors ^c	3-6	Preschools / nursery schools in England	R, Da
Coppock, 2011	Child experience of school-based emotional literacy program	9-11 ^b	Public schools in northwest England	T, R, Da
Ergler, 2011	Child neighborhood experience as related to obesity	8-10	Downtown and suburban Auckland, New Zealand	T, R, Da
Evans, 2016	Child caring relations/ inheritance, poverty and family relations / cashew cultivation and gender ^c	Not reported	Tanzania and Uganda / Senegal / Ghana	Di
Hunleth, 2011	Child caring for sick parents / guardians	8-12	Low-income urban area in Zambia	R, Da
Johnson, 2008	Child-researchers identify aspects of school they wish to change	9-11 ^b	Public primary school in suburban Adelaide, Australia	T, R, Da, Di

Table 1 (Continued)

Authors	Topic	Ages	Setting	Area of Research Process Exemplifying Co-Research Strategies with Children ^a
Kellett, 2010	Transportation from the viewpoint of the child of a wheelchair user	11	United Kingdom	T, R, Da, Di
Kellett et al., 2004	Children learn to conduct research and create projects	9-10	Large primary school in United Kingdom	T, R, Da, Di
Kirova & Emme, 2008	Role of image-text-body relationships in intercultural nonverbal communication	9-11 ^b	Urban elementary-junior high school in western Canada	T, R, Da, Di
Mayes, 2013	Student analysis of teachers' practice	14-15 ^b	Comprehensive co-educational high school in Australia	Da
Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010	Apprenticing students as co-researchers in the process of school reform	14-15 ^b	Comprehensive high school in southwest Sydney, Australia	T, R, Da, Di
Morrow, 2005	Child understandings of family / children's social capital ^c	8-16	Schools in England	T, R, Da, Di
Pinter & Zandian, 2014	Prioritizing child agendas and concerns of children in linguistics research ^c	10-12	United Kingdom and Iran	T, R, Da

Table 1 (Continued)

Authors	Topic	Ages	Setting	Area of Research Process Exemplifying Co-Research Strategies with Children ^a
Pinter & Zandian, 2015	Child-researchers during a research follow-up session	10-11	Public primary school in United Kingdom	T, R, Da, Di
Porter & Abane, 2008	Child mobility and access to transport	11-19	Rural Ghana	R, Di
Porter et al., 2010	Issues working with child-researchers in Africa ^c	Up to age 14	Ghana, Malawi, and South Africa	R, Di
Smith et al., 2002	Young people's health needs	Not reported	United Kingdom	T, R, Da

^a "T" indicates Topic and Aims; "R" indicates Research Design and Data Collection; "Da" indicates Data Analysis and Interpretation; "Di" indicates Dissemination.

^b Although age was unspecified, this is the typical age range for children in the school level(s) identified in the study.

^c Study examines multiple projects.

2.3.2 Child Co-Researchers in Topic and Aims

As evident in Table 1, many studies included at least one of the co-research strategies under Topic and Aims. These strategies may be clustered into three categories: 1) child's agenda; 2) child's role; and 3) child's consent. To begin, child's agenda includes strategies that genuinely incorporate children's aims and agendas, empowering them to make decisions about the nature and focus of the study. Studies embracing children's agendas included those that were adult-initiated and those that were child-initiated (Chen, Weiss, Johnston Nicholson, & Girls Incorporated®, 2010; Ergler, 2011; Johnson, 2008; Kellett, 2010; Kellett et al., 2004; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010; Pinter & Zandian, 2014; 2015). If the study was adult-initiated, then

adults modified or adjusted their questions to meet the aims of children. If the study was child-initiated, then children had the freedom to select the topic of research according to their interests.

Adult-initiated projects embraced children's agendas in several ways. In some cases, adult researchers initiated projects with a general aim, but allowed child-researchers to identify the specific research questions. For example, in Chen et al.'s (2010) evaluation of Girls Inc.[®], adult researchers tasked with evaluating the afterschool program, instead asked program participants (girls aged 12-15) to brainstorm research questions and seek to answer them. While the project was not child-initiated, adult supervisors maintained the flexibility to embrace whatever aspects the girls wanted to evaluate, which included program improvement, health, personal growth, diversity, and community activism (Chen et al., 2010, p. 232). Applying a similar model in a school setting, Mayes and Groundwater-Smith (2010) empowered a student steering committee to vote on research topics for their school reform research.

In some cases, children's research curiosity manifested itself in adult researchers' follow-up projects. Pinter and Zandian (2015) allowed children's interests to modify the initial aims of a follow-up study, while Ergler (2011) created a new follow-up study specifically to address children's research interests. In Pinter and Zandian's (2015) case, children surprised the adult researchers by taking over the session, asking their own questions and demanding that their voices be heard. The adult researchers responded to this interest with a flexibility that allowed the children to adjust the session aims to meet their own interests and inquiries. Ergler (2011), having completed her research project, planned a follow-up session in response to children's requests. Young co-researchers directed data collection (child-guided neighborhood tours) and analyzed the data.

From another perspective, child-initiated and directed projects (see Hart, 1992), such as those directed by Kellett (2010) and Kellett et al. (2004) empowered children to research their own interests. In Kellett et al.'s (2004) study, 10-year-olds in the United Kingdom elected to participate in a Research Club in school, then later undertook their own projects, addressing their topics of interest with support from adult mentors. These topics varied widely, including parent employment and classmate television habits (Kellett et al., 2004). In a later study, Kellett (2010) highlighted the work of an 11-year-old researcher attending the Children's Research Centre at Open University, United Kingdom. Adult researchers at this center provided research training and support for children. The young co-researcher featured in this article chose to study transportation challenges, since her father used a wheelchair (Kellett, 2010). While both of these projects generated from formal programs, the topic and aims of each project were completely up to the child, who pursued her goals with the assistance of adult mentors.

Next, strategies focusing on child's role involve children's understanding of what will be expected of them within the research context. While one might label a child as *co-researcher*, how well might the child understand what that means in context? The adult researchers in this section reported considerable effort to ensure that aims remained transparent and that children understood their roles as co-researchers (Chen et al., 2010; Coppock, 2011; Kellett, 2010; Kellett et al., 2004; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010). Kellett (2010) and Kellett et al. (2004) easily accomplished transparency, since the young researchers initiated and led their own projects.

In adult-initiated studies, some adult researchers met with children, and sometimes parents, to discuss aims and research plans (Coppock, 2011; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010). For example, Mayes and Groundwater-Smith (2010) created a project steering committee of young researchers. Before research began, steering committee members received questions to

think about ahead of time, for example “Why do you think this project is interesting/important? Why do you want to be involved?” (p. 5). In addition, committee members learned about student voice, formulated a vision for the project, and trained as facilitators. They also voted on research topics and named the project: “Our Gee’d Up School” (Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010, p. 5). With such deep engagement during the planning stage of research, young co-researchers expressed an understanding of the aims of the project, having themselves shaped many of them.

A few adult researchers mentioned taking specific steps to ensure that children understood their roles as co-researchers. In three studies, adult researchers provided intensive training to adolescent researchers before the research began (Chen et al., 2010; Coppock, 2011; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010). These pre-research training sessions included specific instruction about the collaborative roles that the young researchers would take in the study. Using methods such as interactive activities and role playing, young co-researchers learned about student voice, academic research principles and protocols, research skills in general and those skills specific to study methodology, as well as ethics and confidentiality procedures (Chen et al., 2010; Coppock, 2011; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010).

Finally, the last strategies under topic and aims include those relating to consent. These strategies address children’s consent to act as researchers, their awareness that they may opt-out, and whether adults involved regained children’s consent throughout the research project. While we must presume that adult researchers obtained consent according to the ethical guidelines governing their research, studies included in this section provided detailed explanation of the efforts made in order to obtain children’s consent (Chen et al., 2010; Coppock, 2011; Ergler,

2011; Kellett, 2010; Kellett et al., 2004; Kirova & Emme, 2008; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010; Morrow, 2005; Pinter & Zandian, 2015; Smith, Monaghan, & Broad, 2002).

Those who explained how they sought children's consent used a variety of approaches. For example, some researchers sought children's consent only after thoroughly explaining and discussing the proposed research at the children's level (Coppock, 2011; Smith et al., 2002). In other studies, adult researchers tried to ensure that children had the opportunity to opt out of any activity. Morrow (2005) provided a detailed example about her continued efforts to obtain consent during each research task, asking, "Is this OK? Are you happy to do this? If you'd rather not do [task], we can ask [teacher] for a different task, or you can do something else" (p. 157).

The strategies under the topic and aims phase of research include those that focus on children's agendas, and those that work to ensure that children understand their roles and consent to fulfill them. Some studies provided examples of strategies used to embrace children's interests and agendas, ensure that children understood the research and their own research roles, and to confirm children's consent to participate. In the following section, I provide detail about how studies exemplified strategies for co-research with children in the research design and data collection phase of the research process.

2.3.3 Child Co-Researchers in Research Design and Data Collection

As shown in Table 1, most of the studies analyzed included at least one of the strategies for co-research with children in the area of research design and data collection. Child co-researchers engaged in this phase through planning, design, and participant selection; data collection; and

research training and support. This section explores the studies that demonstrate co-research strategies in these areas.

First, some studies engaged children in planning, design, and participant selection. In several studies, adult researchers provided detailed examples of how they collaboratively planned research with children (Chen et al., 2010; Coppock, 2011; Porter et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2002). In one adult-initiated project, Porter et al. (2010) planned the study, but they shared data analysis and future research plans with child co-researchers. Other young co-researchers had more engagement in planning and instrument design. Like Chen et al. (2010), Coppock (2011) held pre-research planning sessions with young co-researchers. Unlike Chen et al.'s (2010) adult outsider coming to the research site to work with children, Coppock's (2011) in-school training included child co-researcher focus groups that worked together on goal-setting, skill acquisition, and instrument design. Similarly, Smith et al.'s (2002) young co-researchers made decisions about "ground rules for involvement, questionnaire design, practical arrangements, and the conduct of research interviews" (p. 192).

Other studies provided examples of how adult researchers embraced their child colleagues' direct influence on instrument design (Kellett et al., 2004; Pinter & Zandian, 2014, 2015). In Pinter and Zandian's (2014) overview of lessons learned in research with children, the authors recalled a prior study in which children piloted research interviews and questionnaires, leading to tools that were more "authentic" and appealing to other children (p. 70). Pinter and Zandian (2015) further illustrated this in their follow-up study with schoolchildren; when they invited the children to evaluate research tools, children offered their opinions about various activities and suggestions for additional questions that the adult researcher could ask. In addition, Kellett et al.'s (2004) article is unique in that it features entire studies designed and

executed by young researchers. As part of a Research Club activity, young researchers maintained “completely free choice” in what and how they planned to research (Kellett et al., 2004, p. 332). This free choice was also reflected in the ability of children to select who would participate in their studies. While one young researcher asked for volunteers among her classmates, another handed out her questionnaire in class, where “everyone seemed happy to [participate]” (Kellett et al., 2004, p. 337), although the idea of consent in school classrooms was not discussed. This illustration provided the clearest example of child co-researchers’ engagement in participant selection. Young researchers experienced more engagement with data collection.

Next, several studies employed co-research strategies in the data collection. Many adult researchers detailed how they used multiple collection strategies or alternative activities for children (Chen et al., 2010; Cheshire & Edwards, 1991; Clark, 2007; Coppock, 2011; Ergler, 2011; Hunleth, 2011; Johnson, 2008; Kellett, 2010; Kellett et al., 2004; Kirova & Emme, 2008; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010; Morrow, 2005; Pinter & Zandian, 2014, 2015; Porter & Abane, 2008; Porter et al., 2010). However, only a handful of adult researchers explained whether they planned data collection to include children’s daily activities, rather than arranged settings (Coppock, 2011; Hunleth, 2011; Kirova & Emme, 2008; Porter et al., 2010).

Those researchers who provided examples of attempting to incorporate data collection into more natural settings used a variety of contexts. Porter et al. (2010) and Coppock (2011) incorporated data collection into children’s normal daily activities. Porter et al.’s (2010) study of children’s mobility and transportation experiences in Africa used data collected by children as they made usual journeys to school, home, the market, and so forth, with the goal of gaining an insight into the authentic experiences of children who commuted on foot. In addition, Coppock

(2011) used a classroom activity already in place, ‘Circle Time,’ to incorporate peer research and mentoring. Similarly, Kirova and Emme (2008) tried to make an unnatural data collection practice more normal by introducing *fotonovela* (photo journaling) in a school-based photo club, to which both young researchers and non-researchers belonged. Additionally, Hunleth (2011) incorporated research-specific activities, including tape-recording and focus group sessions; she also collected data through the normal activity of children creating drawings.

Finally, several studies incorporated strategies for research training and support for child co-researchers. Several studies mentioned, but usually with little detail, that adult researchers provided research training and support for the young researchers, both before and during the project (Chen et al., 2010; Clark, 2007; Coppock, 2011; Johnson, 2008; Kellett et al., 2004; Kirova & Emme, 2008; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010; Pinter & Zandian, 2015; Porter & Abane, 2008; Porter et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2002). While few adult authors clearly outlined *how* they provided research training and support, it is notable that studies that included children in the planning phase also mentioned providing training and support for the young novice researchers (Chen et al., 2010; Coppock, 2011; Porter et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2002).

In all, it was clear that strategies within the research design and data collection phase were popular among the studies in this review. Some studies provided illuminating detail about how young researchers engaged with research planning activities and instrument design. Child co-researchers who engaged in the planning phase also received research training and support from their adult colleagues. However, only in one (child-directed) study were young researchers engaged in participant selection. The following section provides detail about how studies used strategies for co-research with children in the data analysis and interpretation phase.

2.3.4 Child Co-Researchers in Data Analysis and Interpretation

As shown in Table 1, many of the studies provided detail about using strategies for co-research with children in data analysis and interpretation. These strategies included aspects of ideas and agendas, data sharing, and interpretations. First, several studies empowered children to share their ideas and agendas. These studies provided examples of engaging child co-researchers by encouraging children's ideas about what was important in the data, and several studies minimized adult ideas and maximized child agendas. Some studies encouraged child-led analysis and interpretation, with adult researchers on hand to provide advice (Chen et al., 2010; Ergler, 2011; Johnson, 2008; Smith et al., 2002). In an example of collaborative analysis, Mayes (2013) facilitated a focus group data analysis session, including two student-researchers and the teacher they evaluated. In addition, in Morrow (2005) and Pinter and Zandian's (2014, 2015) studies, reporting findings to children provided the opportunity for child co-researchers to contribute their own ideas.

In contrast, one must keep in mind that in most cases, the adult researcher wrote the journal article included in this review, having the final say about analysis and interpretation. To further explain, in Kirova and Emme's (2008) study of children's body language, young researchers collaboratively analyzed the fotonovelas created by other children. First, children analyzed their own photographs. Then, children who were not involved in photograph collection provided word bubbles, as if providing the text to a comic strip. However, the adult researcher made the final analysis of the photographs and the stories they represented. That final analysis therefore belonged to the adult researchers, who presented that analysis in the journal article. Similarly, in Johnson's (2008) study, young researchers who collected data (photographs), selected and ordered the photos for discussion, in that way directing the analysis and

interpretation of the data. Again, however, the adult researcher provided the final analysis evident in the journal article. To counter this, in child-initiated and directed studies, young researchers took control of data analysis and interpretation. As mentioned above, in Kellett (2010) and Kellett et al.'s (2004) studies, children managed all aspects of the research.

Next, some studies included data sharing strategies for co-research. This strategy pertains to maintaining a policy of openness with young researchers, sharing and discussing collected data throughout the process. A few adult researchers shared data with their young colleagues. Methods for sharing data included group debriefing sessions, focus groups, and check-ins (Chen et al., 2010; Ergler, 2011; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010). For example, Chen et al. (2010) facilitated group discussions about the data that the girls collected.

Finally, some studies used co-research strategies to capture children's interpretations in context or after data collection had taken place, relating to the temporality of children's interpretations. Some adult researchers provided examples of capturing children's interpretations in context during data collection. For example, children might explain their drawings as they were drawing them (Clark, 2007; Hunleth, 2011; Kellett, 2010; Kirova & Emme, 2008). Other adult researchers only discussed children's interpretations at the completion of the project (Chen et al., 2010; Ergler, 2011; Mayes, 2013). Some studies used both methods (Johnson, 2008; Kellett et al., 2004; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010; Pinter & Zandian, 2015).

In sum, many studies attempted to prioritize children's interpretations, yet adult researchers maintained responsibility for the final analysis as presented in published articles. In a few studies, adults provided examples of sharing data with children throughout the research process. Some adult researchers collected children's interpretations while the data was collected,

others asked children to interpret at the end of the project, but more studies employed both techniques. Findings related to the final phase of the research process, dissemination, are discussed in the following section.

2.3.5 Child Co-Researchers in Dissemination

Dissemination concerns the direction in which a study's findings are shared. Dissemination includes two strategies, representing two directions: *inward*, in which findings are disseminated back to the young co-researchers, and *outward*, in which the dissemination of findings outside the project achieves a broader impact. As shown in Table 1, few of the studies included in this review provided examples of young co-researchers' involvement with dissemination.

To begin, inward dissemination involves sharing young co-researchers' findings with them. These studies provide examples in which the findings that young co-researchers helped to generate (through their previous work on the research project) were shared with them (Evans, 2016; Kellett, 2010; Kellett et al., 2004; Pinter & Zandian, 2015). In one adult-directed study, Evans (2016) compiled the children's findings and interpreted and reported them back to the children, as well as to outside organizations. In the two child-initiated studies in this review (Kellett, 2010; Kellett et al., 2004), children managed the entire research process and thus were the first to receive the findings. As mentioned previously, Pinter and Zandian (2015) reported findings back to their child co-researchers, whose collaboration at the follow-up session led to new research directions.

In another direction, outward dissemination strategies are evidenced by studies seeking broader impact. In these studies, adult and child research partners together discussed broader implications of their findings (Chen et al., 2010; Evans, 2016; Johnson, 2008; Kellett et al.,

2004; Kirova & Emme, 2008; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010; Pinter & Zandian, 2015; Porter & Abane, 2008; Porter et al., 2010). In Kellett et al.'s (2004) uniquely child-directed study, the adult researcher used children's studies verbatim in a journal article, crediting two ten-year-old co-researchers as co-authors.

In some adult-directed studies in this list, children reported findings to their local organization, school, or community members, posted findings on a school website, or were interviewed by a local newspaper (Chen et al., 2010; Johnson, 2008; Kirova & Emme, 2008; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010). Yet, whether a study was directed by adults or children, tangible impact seemed to rely on adult researchers. For example, in Kellett's (2010) article, after a child conducted a small study about transportation problems for children of disabled parents, an adult researcher brokered a meeting with a member of the local government's transport department (p. 201). Kellett (2010) reported that this encounter led to changes, but what changes remain unreported. For Johnson's (2008) students, child-led research resulted in school budget recommendations. Yet for many child-researchers, it remains unclear whether their efforts resulted in broader impact.

In summary, dissemination, whether back to children or outward for broader impact, remained the least explored by the studies included in this review. Interestingly, no matter how involved children might have been during the research project, few articles provided examples of adult researchers sharing the findings with their young research collaborators. Yet, in the examples provided of (adult-brokered) broader impact, the young co-researchers' findings may have led to change that affected their own and other children's lives.

2.4 IMPLICATIONS OF LITERATURE REVIEW FINDINGS

This section discusses findings as they relate to co-research methods in general and to the current study specifically. Similar to Section 2.3, this section is structured after the research process presented in the conceptual model.

2.4.1 Topic and Aims

Twelve of the studies in this review provided examples of employing strategies for co-research with children during the topic and aims phase. Adults in these studies used a variety of co-research strategies to empower children as researchers. For example, Chen et al. (2010) empowered the girls in their study to approach the research question from whatever lens they wanted. In addition, in Pinter and Zandian's (2015) study, adult researchers responded "flexibly" to children's "unsolicited comments as they emerged while the children were engaging with the researcher's pre-set questions" (p. 240). Some prior researchers met with children and parents prior to the study to help them understand their research roles (Chen et al., 2010; Coppock, 2011; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010). Some also provided training prior to asking for consent (Coppock, 2011; Smith et al., 2002).

Yet some other studies revealed a struggle with engaging children in a study's topic and aims phase. Some of this could be due to practical reasons. Beyond funding issues, adult researchers may suffer under the academic pressure to publish (Porter & Abane, 2008). Yet at the same time, Alderson (2001) argued that "funding bodies increasingly expect researchers to work closely with user groups," such as children (p. 151).

How might an adult researcher strike a balance? Pinter (2014) suggests that adult researchers might begin a project by bringing a broad idea to children and allowing them to brainstorm research ideas within it. The children's participation might bring to light certain perspectives that encourage adjustment of the initial research questions or aims (Pinter, 2014). When children struggle to understand study aims and their roles, a flexible adult researcher might view it as an opportunity, rather than an obstacle. For example, when Pinter and Zandian (2015) returned to share findings with children with whom they had previously researched, the children instead asked pointed questions about the research process. The adult researchers took the opportunity to empower children to shape a subsequent research study, which focused on the children's interests and needs.

2.4.2 Research Design and Data Collection

Most of the studies in this review (17 of 19) used strategies within the conceptual model to engage children in the research design and data collection phase of research. Most popular were the use of multiple data collection strategies and providing training and support. For example, several studies incorporated multiple data collection activities, providing young co-researchers with the option of opting into some or all of the activities, as they felt comfortable (see Chen et al., 2010; Cheshire & Edwards, 1991; Clark, 2007; Coppock, 2011; Ergler, 2011; Hunleth, 2011; Johnson, 2008; Kellett, 2010; Kellett et al., 2004; Kirova & Emme, 2008; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010; Morrow, 2005; Pinter & Zandian, 2014, 2015; Porter & Abane, 2008; Porter et al., 2010).

In spite of the usefulness of these strategies, they were not universally employed in the studies reviewed. Why might adult researchers struggle to employ these strategies? It could be

due to the adult researcher's role and goals (i.e., funding, research, and tenure). Only one study provided an example of child co-researchers engaged with participant selection: a completely child-directed study (Kellett et al., 2004). More adult researchers engaged children in the data analysis and interpretation phase, as illustrated in the following section.

2.4.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Most (14 of 19) studies in this review provided clear examples of employing co-research strategies with children in data analysis and interpretation. More specifically, more than half of the studies that claimed to engage children as co-researchers provided examples of prioritizing children's ideas in interpretation.

Notably, adult researchers in the studies reviewed did not discuss sharing data with their young co-researchers. Why might adult researchers forego providing examples? Perhaps the process was so integrated that adult researchers felt that there was nothing to report. Alternatively, it might be in this phase where adults must maintain control, in order to meet the requests of funders, review boards, or others. Mayall (1994) pointed out that the interpretation phase of research is where adult/child power differentials become most evident. In her words, "however much one may involve children in considering data, the presentation of it is likely to require analyses and interpretations, at least for some purposes, which do demand different knowledge than that generally available to children" (p. 11). While the child may analyze and interpret data during the project, the final product remains the words, or "voice" of the adult researcher. Coppock (2011) plainly reminded the reader that the adult researcher is ultimately "the author of the report and therefore the *primary* representer of reality" (p. 444). This

representation of reality is also important when discussing young co-researchers' engagement in the dissemination phase.

2.4.4 Dissemination

A few more than half of the studies in this review (11 of 19) used a co-research strategy for inward or outward dissemination. However, according to Christensen and Prout (2002), sharing findings with young co-researchers remains the most overlooked aspect of engaging children in research. Additionally, while children might take charge of many facets of research, gaining broader impact seems to rely on adult researchers. For example, in Kellett's (2010) completely child-directed study, broader impact was not achieved until an adult researcher connected the child and her research with a member of the local government. By arranging this meeting, the adult researcher prevented the child's efforts from diminishing to "token involvement," which ignores children's findings and eliminates any spreading impact (Alderson, 2008, p. 283; see also Hart, 1992). Such experiences can lead to frustration and negative feelings for children engaged in research (Alderson, 2008; Hart, 1992). The adult-child collaboration in this instance led to tangible broader impact.

2.5 SUMMARY

The literature review presented in this chapter explored ways in which studies where children were given the title of "researcher" utilized strategies for co-research across the research process. The studies provided an illuminating review of how adult researchers used co-research strategies

to collaborate with children in various aspects of research. One limitation to this literature review is that there are so few studies featuring co-research in practice (Kim, 2016; Lundy et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2002). Due to the scarcity of examples, one must look across the entirety of social sciences literature and across age groups. One hopes that future studies will provide more examples of co-research in practice.

In any case, there is much to learn from prior researchers' successes and struggles. Prior studies revealed that children were responsive to training, and that they could grow into competent researchers. In addition, adult researchers used multiple methods for data collection, acknowledging that different children may have different preferences. At the same time, consent seemed to remain a struggle, in spite of considerable effort. Also of note, adults were less likely to include children in dissemination than in any other phase of a study. This may be due to the predominant background issues that prompt research studies in the first place, including funding, tenure, and publishing. These issues lead to a seemingly inevitable conclusion, that the adult will retain control and remain the person whose voice is heard. It is also worth noting that while studies embracing children as collegial co-researchers with adults seek to "listen to children," in very few (e.g., Kellett et al. (2004) and Pinter and Zandian (2015)) did we read the words (or hear the voice) of the child.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, according to theoretical literature, co-research with children seeks to listen to children and to empower children as social actors (Alderson, 2008; Christensen & Prout, 2002; Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Pinter, 2014; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008). While the studies in this review demonstrated considerable effort to include children as co-research colleagues, children's perspectives remained overlooked. This includes children's thoughts and feelings about conducting research and being researchers.

The current study brings together the need to understand children as co-researchers with another overlooked role of children, that of tourist (Kerr & Price, 2016, 2018; Price & Kerr, 2017a, 2017b). The following chapters present one adult/child co-research collaboration, which took place during a multi-day school excursion. This study explores young co-researchers' descriptions of the research process, as revealed in research conversations and in replies to a written prompt. It also explores children's expectations at the beginning of the experience and their revelations after the experience was complete. The following chapter provides background and context for the current study and a discussion of its methods.

3.0 EXPECTATIONS AND REVELATIONS: CHILDREN DISCUSS CONDUCTING RESEARCH DURING A MULTI-DAY SCHOOL EXCURSION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As evident from the literature presented in Chapter 2, prior researchers have used many strategies to empower children as co-researchers in collaborative research activities. While the conceptual model illustrates a range of strategies for use with young co-researchers throughout a research study, this study intentionally included children as researchers in data collection alone. This chapter explains the research methods used to complete this qualitative study of children's experiences as co-researchers. The following sections provide background and context for the current study, situating it as an offshoot to a larger, ongoing study, and discuss the research problem and aims of this study.

3.2 BACKGROUND OF THE CURRENT STUDY

The current study is an offshoot of a larger study. This section provides background of the larger study and situates this current study within it, including details about my involvement. This chapter tells the story of the development of this current study, presented both in text and in Figure 2. Throughout this document, I share what information I can about the young researchers

and the adults from Midwest Town. However, due to IRB guidelines and child protection protocols, I cannot share personally identifying information.

3.2.1 Development of the Larger Study

As previously mentioned, this study is a small outgrowth from a larger study that explores children's experiences as tourists at sites of painful heritage. The larger study developed as part of a response to a request from assistance from the National Park Service and the Flight 93 National Memorial. As mentioned previously, Figure 2 illustrates the sequence of events that led to the addition of the children as researchers component which is analyzed for this study.

3.2.1.1 The crash of United Flight 93

Sometimes overlooked among other tragic events of September 11, 2001, the passengers and crew of United Flight 93 are memorialized at its crash site, near Shanksville, PA. In a prior article, our research team (Kerr, Fried, Price, Cornick, & Dugan, 2017) told the story this way:

On September 11, 2001, United Flight 93 ascended from Newark, New Jersey for a flight to San Francisco, California. One hour later, four hijackers stormed the cockpit, overtook the pilots, and gained control of the aircraft. Through onboard telephone calls to loved ones, the passengers and crew soon realized that three other hijacked airliners had crashed into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. They assembled to resist the hijackers, storming the cockpit with boiling water, beverage carts, and other improvised weapons. Confronted with this uprising while traveling at a speed of 563 mph, the terrorists crashed the plane into a field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. No one survived. (p. 1)

3.2.1.2 The development of the Flight 93 – 9/11 Research Team

As shown in Figure 2, our research team developed during an initial collaboration with the National Park Service, which invited us to assist with the redesign of the Memorial's Junior Ranger program. I was invited to join the research team by its Principal Investigator, Professor

Mary Margaret Kerr. Kerr had been my advisor during my masters thesis, a systematic review of the ways in which informal, family caregivers of dementia patients conduct research, learning to provide and define “good” care (Price, 2014). Kerr asked me to conduct a similar interdisciplinary review to uncover background literature about children’s responses to terrorism or mass trauma. I did so, and later our co-authored synthesis became the research team’s first scholarly publication (Kerr & Price, 2016). I was eager to learn additional research methods. My role in the team slowly evolved, as I returned to graduate school to pursue a doctorate.

3.2.1.3 Initial archival study leads to considering children at sites of painful heritage

In considering how to design the Junior Ranger program, we launched our research into the problem of teaching children about terrorism in an accurate yet age appropriate manner. In order to understand what children think and feel at places like this, we started studying their comments, drawings, and other tributes, carefully cataloged and stored in the Memorial archives (Kerr, Fried, et al., 2017; Kerr & Price, 2018).

Through my review of the literature and through working with the Junior Ranger Program, we became aware of the issues surrounding children’s experiences at *sites of painful heritage*. Sites of painful heritage (sometimes called *dark sites*) include those places highlighting “death, suffering, and the seemingly macabre” (Stone, 2006, p. 146). We identified children as overlooked in tourism research, despite the high numbers of children traveling worldwide (Kerr & Price, 2016). Every year thousands of children visit museums, memorials, and other locations on school trips or with their families (Kerr & Price, 2016). Many of these destinations are considered sites of painful heritage, such as terrorism or war-related destinations, which are frequently visited across the globe (Kerr, Price, Demore Savine, McMullen, & Ifft, 2017; Smith, 1998). For example, more than 100,000 schoolchildren visit the National 9/11

Pentagon Memorial annually (A. Ammerman, personal communication, August 30, 2016). Yet, the research literature remains surprisingly silent about young visitors' experiences (Canosa & Graham, 2016; Frost & Laing, 2017; Kerr & Price, 2016, 2018; Poria & Timothy, 2014; Small, 2008; Sutcliffe & Kim, 2014).

We became aware that studying children's experiences on trips like these is important because children view the world differently from adults. Specifically, according to Kerr and Price (2018) current, adult-oriented theories cannot account for four factors unique to children: 1) incomplete understanding of death; 2) lack of agency in choosing destinations; 3) youthful exploratory behavior; and 4) emotional vulnerability. Additionally, children who visit sites like these might experience distress that derives from even an indirect exposure to death and suffering (Kerr & Price, 2016, 2018). We suggested that in order to study children's experiences on school excursions to sites of painful heritage, researchers might try a combination of methods, including observing and listening to children, surveys, focus group interviews, individual interviews, and reviewing the archival materials that children leave behind (Kerr & Price, 2018). In order to assist the Junior Ranger program, we were limited by the lack of prior research to studying what was available to us in the Memorial archives (Kerr & Price, 2018).

3.2.1.4 The link to Midwest Town

Through our continuing work in the archives, we found a wreath left by Midwest Town eighth grade students, on which they had tied handwritten cards expressing gratitude and remembrance. In 2014, an undergraduate member of the research team suggested that we contact the school. This was the beginning of our continuing relationship with the Midwest Town school and community.

We discovered that each year, two faculty from Midwest Town organize a trip for eighth grade students from their home school in the Midwest, to the Flight 93 National Memorial, then to Washington, DC. We contacted the faculty (Ms. G. and Mr. M.), who were open to our interest. We viewed this connection as an opportunity to learn more about children's experiences at the Memorial and other painful heritage sites. Ms. G. and Mr. M invited us to join on their annual excursion. In preparation, we sought background research about school excursions and found that there was little. Yet we learned much from Seaton (2002) about the ethnographic context of guided tours. Armed with all the knowledge we could gather, we embarked on this mobile ethnography.

As shown in Figure 2, in 2015 we first joined the Midwest Town eighth grade for the annual excursion. Including myself, five members of the university research team carpoled in personal vehicles and stayed in the same hotel as the students, joining them for meals and most of their activities. We recorded observations with handheld recorders, and we collected student responses to prompts on comment cards, which were completed on the buses between destinations. Finally, we supplied the students with loaner iPads. These iPads were outfitted with the SonicPics application, with which pairs of students took photographs during their excursion and added audio narratives. Our research project was low-budget, and the iPads we used were loaned to us by the university or by colleagues. All were Internet-disabled and cleared of all applications except for SonicPics and the camera.

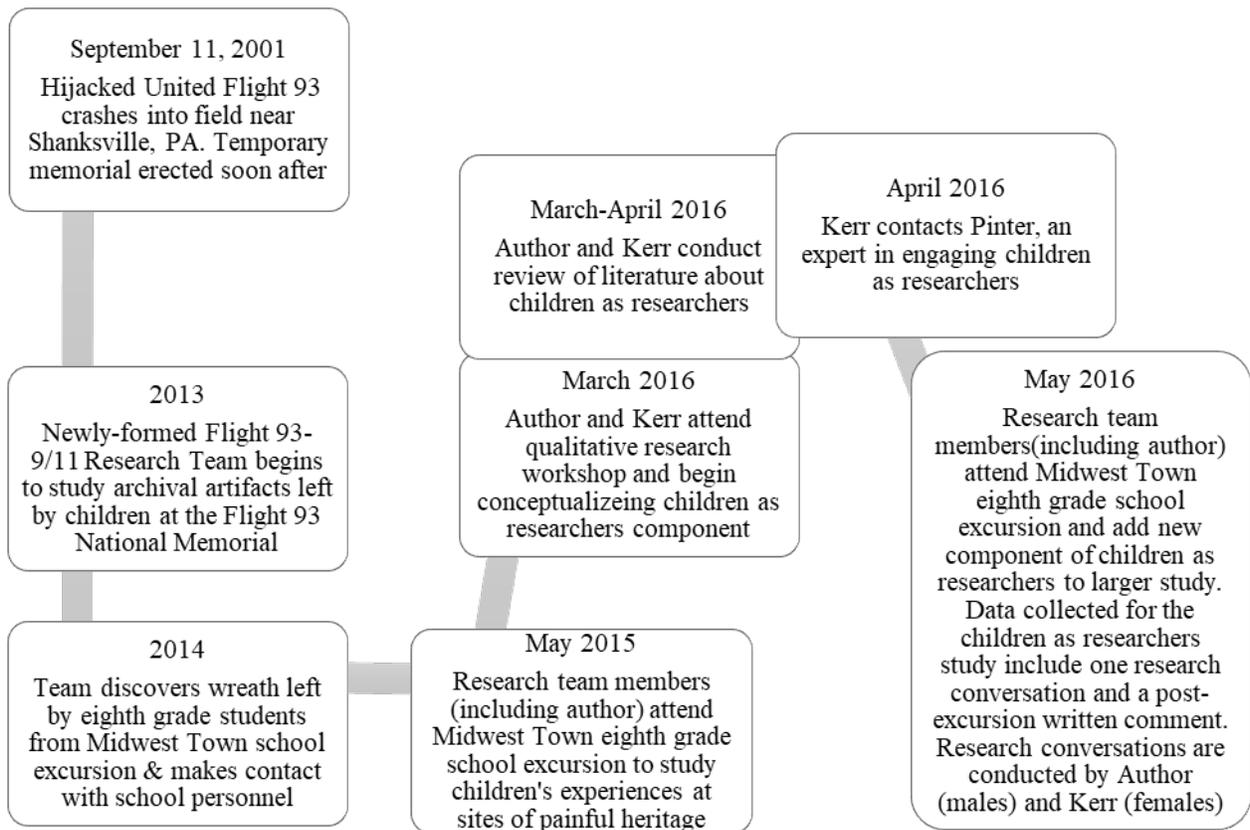


Figure 2. Pathway to the Current Study

3.3 THE CURRENT STUDY

The current study is a small offshoot of the larger study described above. This study adds a component that explores children’s experiences as researchers. This section describes the development of the current study.

3.3.1 Considering Children as Researchers

As shown in Figure 2, for the 2016 excursion, we added a component that addressed the idea of children as researchers. The notion of exploring these eighth graders' experiences as researchers arose during a qualitative research workshop that Kerr and I attended together in March 2016. As we shared our work with outside researchers, their interest was piqued not as much by our tourism research agenda, but rather by these young people who roamed the sites with iPads, taking photographs and narrating descriptions.

The idea of children conducting research piqued my interest for other reasons. As mentioned previously, my master's thesis explored the research behavior of family caregivers of dementia patients (Price, 2014). My interest in how people seek information, or *research*, developed from my background as a research and instruction librarian and community educator. I began my doctoral studies after working for several years. My professional background includes teaching research skills in university research libraries and nonprofit education centers. I am interested in how people learn to research, how they learn to seek information to satisfy their needs and find the answers to their questions (see Wilson, 1981). The idea of collaborating with brand-new researchers in a complicated and understudied setting (a school excursion to sites of painful heritage) sounded fascinating.

As shown in Figure 2, I later explored this child as researcher concept more fully by reading the literature included as Chapter 2. The literature review illustrated that there are few studies that seek to embrace children as *co-researchers*, full and equal research partners with adults. Those studies that sought to empower children in this way tended to be qualitative. None were in the context of tourism or school excursions, and few explored children's perceptions of their researcher experience.

We also began conversing with one of the researchers we identified, Dr. Annamaria Pinter from the University of Warwick. Dr. Pinter's work with child co-researchers influenced this study, particularly in the area of research conversations, as explained later.

Inspired by all of this input, for the 2016 excursion we added a new *children as researchers* component to the study. To address this research aim, we collected data specific to this study. This data included small group interviews, informally called *research conversations* (see Dockett & Perry, 2011; Pinter, 2014; Pinter & Zandian, 2015) and responses to a written prompt. Table 2 illustrates the timeline of the current study, including pre-excursion sessions and data collection. To recall, the children in this study were eighth graders, aged 13-15. Previously, I defined *school excursion* as a multi-day trip, including overnight stays, which is sponsored by a school.

Table 2. This Study in Detail

Date	Action	Data Collected for This Study	Personnel	Prompts/ Materials
One week prior to excursion	Presentation at informational meeting for parents and families to speak about study and consent	N/A	Kerr	Recruitment Script (Appendix A) Study Assent Letter (Appendix B)
One week prior to excursion	40 minute in class research training for students, including training for using SonicPics app	N/A	Kerr	N/A

Table 2. (Continued)

Date	Action	Data Collected for This Study	Personnel	Prompts/ Materials
Day 1 of excursion	<p>Children leave school on tour buses at approximately 5AM. Research team joins at first stop (Flight 93 National Memorial) approximately 9AM. Children receive talk from Park Ranger and use iPads to collect data. Children and team members board buses at approximately 11am. Research conversations analyzed for this study take place on buses, led by Kerr (girls' bus) and Author (boys' bus).</p>	<p>Research Conversation</p>	<p>Author, Kerr, and undergraduate research assistants</p>	<p>Research conversations were a flexible format and included the following suggested questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did you decide you wanted to be a researcher on the trip? 2. What do you think it's going to be like being a researcher? 3. What do you think about the questions you see on your clipboards? 4. Would you like to suggest a question for students to answer?

Table 2. (Continued)

Date	Action	Data Collected for This Study	Personnel	Prompts/ Materials
Days 2-4 of excursion	Research team remains with school group for remainder of excursion. Children use the iPads at multiple locations, answer post-visit comment sheets, participate in additional research conversations, and are observed and recorded by university researchers.	N/A	Author, Kerr, undergraduate research assistants, and fellow university researcher (Chiappetta) who joined at Washington D.C.	Sample Itinerary (Appendix C)
Two weeks following excursion	Children complete post-excursion comment analyzed for this study.	Post-Excursion Comment	Collected by school personnel, mailed to Kerr, analyzed for this study by Author	Prompt: “People will ask you about your experience being a researcher. What would you tell them?”

3.3.2 Research Problem

Those who wish to learn more about children as tourists or as co-researchers face similar issues – little is known about the experiences of either group. An exploration of the literature presented in Chapter 2 revealed that in studies in which children are termed *co-researchers*, adults have collaborated with children to various degrees, in different settings, with a variety of methods, and with varying levels of impact. Yet, we still know little about children as co-researchers, because few published studies provide clear examples (Kim, 2016; Lundy et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2002). Similarly, we know little about children’s experiences on school excursions, and few tourism researchers have captured children’s experiences through children’s own words.

3.3.3 Research Aim and Guiding Research Questions

The goal of this study is to provide a first glimpse into children’s descriptions of conducting research on a school excursion and of themselves as co-researchers. To recall, the term co-researcher refers here to one who participates equally with adults during some aspect (e.g., data collection) of the research process. Specifically, this study addresses the following questions: a) How do young co-researchers on a school excursion describe the different parts of the research process or co-research strategies identified in Chapter 2?; and b) What do these young co-researchers say about themselves as researchers?

3.3.4 Ethical Safeguards

As previously mentioned, this study is a small offshoot of an existing study of children's school excursions to sites of painful heritage. The two forms of data under consideration were collected during and after a four-day overnight school excursion in May 2016, part of an ongoing research project approved by the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board. The following subsection explains the context of the larger study and of the present investigation.

3.3.5 Participants

For the 2016 excursion, the participants (co-researchers) included 59 male and female students, aged 13 to 15 years. The students attended a small rural public school in the Midwest. The school is located in "Midwest Town." According to census data, Midwest Town is a village of approximately 1,500 residents, demographically rural, poor, and white (United States Census Bureau, 2010). All local public school students (grades K-12) attend school in one building complex. Most students have known each other since kindergarten, and many families have deep roots in the community. The teachers who organize this annual excursion have commented that it is viewed as a "rite of passage" within the community.

For some students, this was their first trip out of state. While on the excursion, I overheard students make statements such as, "I've never stayed in a hotel before!" or "I'm never riding in an elevator again!" In addition to organizing trip activities and other related duties, I observed chaperones make efforts to explain proper behavior for many of these new situations, such as hotel etiquette, ordering from a restaurant menu, and interactions with homeless people.

For some students from a community like this one, the \$750 cost of this excursion can seem like an insurmountable obstacle. To overcome this, the school offers organized fundraising efforts. Students attending the excursion started raising money in sixth grade, two years before the trip. Fundraising opportunities included staffing concession stands at football games, selling candy, and similar activities. Even with advance planning, not all students could afford to attend. According to trip leaders, if students expressed a desire to attend, had parental approval, but could not raise the money, sometimes community members or teachers made anonymous donations on their behalf. Still, not every eighth grade student could attend the trip, although most did.

3.3.6 Setting

The 2016 excursion spanned four solidly booked days from Midwest Town to Flight 93 National Memorial, Shanksville, PA, and onward to Washington DC, where students visited places as varied as Arlington National Cemetery, Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum, Medieval Times Dinner and Jousting, the Newseum, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the National Mall. As shown in Appendix C, daily itineraries started early, about seven in the morning, and often ended after ten at night. Students were not permitted to have their cell phones or other Internet-connected devices during the daily activities. They were permitted to bring and use digital cameras.

For this trip, we met the students at the Memorial and rode the buses with them for the entirety of the multi-day excursion. We did this for two purposes: a) so that we could fully embed ourselves in observation, and b) so that we could collect data on the buses while in transit (see Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 301-305; Seaton, 2002). Guided by prior research, we used

several methods to prepare ourselves and our young collaborators for the co-research experience. The following section explains how prior research shaped this study.

3.3.7 Influence of Prior Literature on the Current Study

The current study explores a group of eighth graders' involvement as co-researchers during a multi-day school excursion. The aim is to uncover how these adolescents described their involvement as co-researchers and what they said about the research process. This is explicitly reflected in the research questions, as previously mentioned.

The current study implemented several co-research strategies in the topic and aims and research design and data collection phases. First, use of the iPads allowed a focus on the young co-researchers' agendas. Like Chen et al. (2010) and Mayes and Groundwater-Smith (2010), we introduced the study to the young researchers with a general goal, which was to understand what children think, feel, and do at memorials. The young co-researchers explored excursion sites with iPads in hand, making judgment calls as to what was important or interesting enough for them to photograph and describe. Next, we made efforts to ensure that the aims of this project were transparent to young co-researchers. Like Coppock (2011), we met with both parents and students to explain roles and goals. An adult researcher attended the family/student meeting one week before the trip. During that meeting, she introduced the study and rationale for including the students as co-researchers (i.e., "No one really knows how teens think and feel about places they visit on trips. We think you have a lot to tell us, and we want to hear and see your ideas about your trip."). Appendices A and B include the recruitment script and informational handout.

Additionally, as shown in Table 2, young co-researchers received one class session of training in the week before the trip, to help them understand the project aims and their roles as

researchers. This was similar to strategies employed by Chen et al. (2010), Coppock (2011), and Mayes and Groundwater-Smith (2010). The Principal Investigator spent time with the students in their classrooms, leading specific discussions intended to (a) clarify the consent process, including the students' rights to skip any of the data collection activities; (b) explain the data collection activities that the students could undertake; (c) demonstrate how to use the technology provided; and (d) encourage the students about their ability to serve as "co-researchers" (see for example Alderson, 2008; Bradbury-Jones & Taylor, 2015; Christensen & Prout, 2002; Lundy et al., 2011; Pinter, 2014; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008). For example, students were asked, "Who is a researcher?" and "Who can do research?" "What if you don't want to do research one day?" As reflected in that final question, we also wanted to ensure that they had multiple opportunities to opt out, and that they understood and consented to act as researchers. It was our goal that students would be aware that they could opt out of any activity at any time. All of the students on the trip consented to participate and engaged in the study throughout the four days, although students opted out of individual activities as they chose, a freedom recommended by Einarsdóttir (2007).

We also implemented two specific strategies from the research design and data collection phase of the process. First, as previously mentioned, we employed multiple data collection strategies. As shown in Chapter 2, the use of multiple data collection strategies is popular among those who wish to co-research with children (see Chen et al., 2010; Cheshire & Edwards, 1991; Clark, 2007; Coppock, 2011; Ergler, 2011; Hunleth, 2011; Johnson, 2008; Kellett, 2010; Kellett et al., 2004; Kirova & Emme, 2008; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010; Morrow, 2005; Pinter & Zandian, 2014, 2015; Porter & Abane, 2008; Porter et al., 2010). Second, as mentioned in the section above, we provided research training and support to students during the weeklong

classroom sessions before the excursion began. Moreover, research team members were on hand to solve problems with iPads and answer questions throughout the excursion.

3.3.8 Data Collection

Since the aim of this study was to understand how young co-researchers described their experiences as co-researchers, we collected two forms of data: research conversations and written responses to a prompt. As previously noted, Table 2 includes a timeline of activities.

First, students participated in research conversations on their buses. These were conducted immediately after leaving their first destination, the Flight 93 National Memorial. The Memorial was the first stop for the students on this trip. Here, they had their first experiences with data collection and using the iPads. For this initial research experience, we reinforced research roles at the outset, and we initiated conversations about the experience on the bus afterward. At Memorial, the students were greeted by the university research team and a park ranger. In a short presentation, the ranger thanked the students for their research and for assisting the National Park Service with understanding what they and other young people think, feel, and experience at memorials. The ranger, who has informed aspects of the larger study, specifically asked the students for their feedback on the new Visitor Center and its exhibits. Student pairs and triads received iPads and explored the Memorial crash site, wall of names monument, and visitor center. Immediately following their visit to the memorial, students were offered the opportunity to participate in research conversations, while the tour bus was en route to Washington, DC. The protocol for these conversations was as follows.

According to school policy, one bus transported male students and the other transported female students. Accompanied by an undergraduate researcher, I traveled on the boys' bus,

accompanied by three male school staff and a female nurse from the community. Three researchers travelled with the girls, accompanied by two female school staff. Following the advice of Pinter, who has studied children as researchers, we invited small groups of two or three students to talk with us on the bus, if they chose (see Pinter & Zandian, 2015). Researchers or students held a microphone attached to a recorder, so that remarks would be audible despite highway traffic. In addition, we invited them to interview one another by passing the microphone back and forth if they preferred (A. Pinter, personal communication, April 1, 2016; Hunleth, 2011). Adult researchers offered a set of questions handwritten on an index card as possible topics, but we explained that they were free to talk about anything on their minds.

Influenced by the work of Pinter and Zandian (2014), the questions posed to the students included these (also shown in Table 2):

1. How did you decide you wanted to be a researcher on the trip?
2. What do you think it's going to be like being a researcher?
3. What do you think about the questions you see on your clipboards?
4. Would you like to suggest a question for students to answer?

My experience of conducting research conversations on the boys' bus was more difficult than I expected. I had studied and refreshed my interviewing skills prior to the trip. I had role played with Kerr and practiced with my undergraduate research assistant (Danielle). Yet I had not anticipated how crowded the boys' bus would be. On the girls' bus, there were enough empty seats available so that girls who wanted to participate could come to the front of the bus. In the boys' bus, there was just one empty seat. Thus, Danielle and I made our way down the aisle, stopping at each pair of seats to ask whether the boys wanted to participate.

This stretch of the trip took place on back roads from rural Shanksville, PA to the Pennsylvania Turnpike, our route to Washington, DC. The narrow road wound up and down hills, and as a result Danielle and I repeatedly stumbled and apologized, bumping into chaperones and grasping seats for balance. To record our conversations with the boys, we found whatever space we could: we squatted in the aisle and stretched out our arms with microphones in hand. In this way, we engaged boys in research conversations.

After the students returned home, the second set of data was collected. The second form of data included responses to a written prompt; an example of which is presented as Figure 3. The students received this question from their history teacher, two weeks after the trip concluded. The prompt read as follows: “People will ask you about your experience being a researcher. What would you tell them? What would you tell them?”

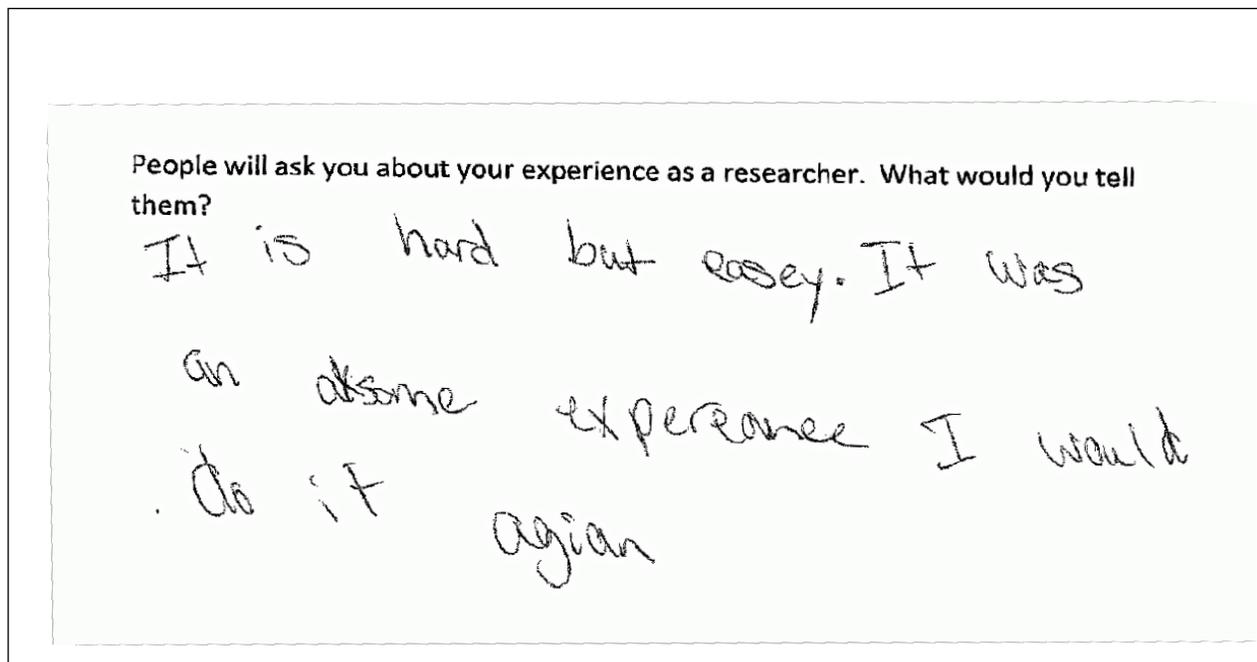


Figure 3. Example of Comment Analyzed as Part of Second Data Set

3.3.9 Data Analysis

3.3.9.1 Data set

The data set for this project includes 52 written comments in response to the question and 18 transcribed research conversations. The data collection method for these was described in section 3.3.8. In order to keep the anonymity of our young colleagues intact, I assigned a pseudonym to each student.

3.3.9.2 Data analysis

Table 3 presents the data analysis method for the current study. The data analysis for this study followed the principles exemplified in Frederick Erickson's (1996) study, "Going for the Zone," which presented a process for using qualitative deductive-inductive analysis. While some qualitative researchers avoid starting with a conceptual framework like the one presented in Chapter 2, Erickson's (1996) study demonstrated that starting with such a model can lead to insightful analysis. At its ideal, a conceptual framework helps the researcher to decide what is important; it provides tools for organizing and filtering data; and it helps the researcher make choices about when and where to work inductively or deductively (Erickson, 2004; Ravitch & Riggan, 2012). In addition, a framework provides clarity for the researcher's own interpretive process (Ravitch & Riggan, 2012).

Erickson's (1996) study provided an appropriate template for my data analysis. Like my study, Erickson's (1996) work was interdisciplinary, drawing from anthropology, education, and music theory. This interdisciplinary nature led Erickson to approach data analysis from a variety of perspectives and theories, and in turn to show the implications of the original conceptual framework for the findings and conclusions reached. In Ericson's (1996) study, conceptual

frameworks informed analytic themes, and themes informed frameworks. Like Erickson's (1996) study, this one is interdisciplinary, situated at the intersection of education and tourism.

Unlike Ericson's (1996) focus on neo-Vygotskian thinking and learning, my study does not analyze the back and forth patterns of conversation. However, like Erickson, I undertook deductive to inductive analysis, using the building blocks of tools that come from prior theory as outlined in the conceptual model. As Ravitch and Riggan (2012) pointed out, the "analytic work is inductive, but the tools he used to *do* the work were provided by previous theory" (p. 97). Like Erickson (1996), I started by using the conceptual model to operationalize analytic themes – creating a subset of descriptors that emerged from the data and described the complications and nuances of these adolescents' descriptions of their co-research experience.

In a subsequent commentary, Erickson (2004) outlined an argument for starting with this top-down approach to data analysis. First, he noted that qualitative analysis can never be solely inductive, neither "theory-independent" nor "theory neutral" (Erickson, 2004, p. 489). Instead, it is influenced by a myriad of factors, including the researcher's temperament, prior experience, and what the researcher has read (Erickson, 2004). Second, he argued that "parsing" or "working from whole to part" makes far more sense than grounded theory approaches, as this is the kind of thing that social actors do (Erickson, 2004, pp. 490-491). As mentioned in Chapter 1, one of the guiding influences in co-research with children is the theory that they are social actors, capable of acting autonomously and forming their own ideas and opinions (Merewether & Fleet, 2013).

I followed Erickson's (1996, 2004) advice for my data analysis. Erickson (2004) emphasized that the act of transcription itself is data analysis. First, I reviewed each transcript and wrote a narrative description of the research conversation (Erickson, 2004, p. 490). I

similarly reviewed and described the collected comments, becoming intimately familiar with both data sets.

The act of writing these narrative descriptions benefitted my data analysis. Writing descriptions transported me into the moments in which the data was created. I immersed myself in the data, far deeper than with transcribed words on a page: I described what I heard, like sounds of a bus or of children laughing. I recalled research conversations that I conducted, and moments such as pauses in conversation when children stopped to think or look at their friends. As I wrote these narrative descriptions, I also began to recognize emergent themes.

After I wrote these descriptions, I read each and asked myself what differences might be found among the descriptions. Then, within the categories presented in Table 1, I distinguished differences, parsing down as new codes emerged (Erickson, 2004, p. 491). After that, I took this system back to one transcript to check for fit, and I readjusted as necessary. After readjusting, I took the system to other transcripts and repeated the process (Erickson, 2004). In this way, the conceptual model and prior literature informed the analysis, but they did not imprison it. Like Erickson's, my analysis was an iterative process that shifted and changed as it was viewed through different lenses (Erickson, 1996; Ravitch & Riggan, 2012).

While I began with a coding scheme that referred to the research process (as shown in Table 3), I also included general codes about the child's tourist experience and self-identity as researcher. It was my aim for these codes to allow the flexibility to consider context and emerging descriptions from the transcripts and comments, and to keep me from becoming trapped within the conceptual framework. These codes, particularly self-as-researcher, led to some of the newest and most interesting revelations that were uncovered by this study. Like Erickson (1996), what I saw in the data changed as I considered it from these different

perspectives – and it was that change which led to interesting findings. As Erickson explained to Ravitch and Riggan (2012) “you see different things...when you have these different orienting concerns, which is part of the point” (p. 103).

I approach this study from a constructivist perspective. Many aspects of that theoretical framework correspond well with this study. While this study includes data collected with one school group on a school trip, elements may be shared among many novice co-researchers, or even across cultures (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110). The interactional nature of the study lends itself to constructivism; in this study, the adult researchers were embedded with young co-researchers (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). Similarly, the personal nature of constructivism lends itself to the interactional nature of this research, in which constructions were elicited and refined through interaction “*between and among* investigator and respondents” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111).

Yet, there is a complex relationship between these theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guide us and remaining open to what emerges from the data. Ravitch and Riggan (2012) argued that while the researcher must understand the relationship between guiding theories and emerging theories, that tension is generative: “The ways that emergent theory maps onto, relates with, and challenges preconceived frameworks are what allow you to critically and appropriately develop data-based theories” (Ravitch & Riggan, 2012, p. 104).

Erickson (1996) noted that what the researcher chooses to emphasize, or the central focus of inquiry, is largely due to personal reasons and experience (p. 56). I admit that as well, as my interest in how individuals seek to conduct research is largely based on my past professional and research experiences. This kind of admission is important because it speaks to researcher

reflexivity, one aspect of trustworthiness (Erickson, 1996; Ravitch & Riggan, 2012). The following section describes how I addressed trustworthiness.

3.3.9.3 Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Richards (2003) explored trustworthiness in detail. Lincoln and Guba (1985) asked, “How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?” (p. 290). They argued for credibility, transferability, and dependability/confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility “depends on evidence of long-term exposure to the context being studied and the adequacy of data collected (use of different methods, etc.)” (Richards, 2003, p. 286). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested several techniques for achieving credibility. Of those, I utilized: 1) activities that make it more likely that findings will be credible (prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation); 2) an activity that aims at refining working ideas as more information becomes available (negative case analysis); and 3) an activity that allows preliminary findings to be checked against raw data (referential adequacy) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; p. 301).

First, I conducted several activities that made it more likely that findings would be credible. To start with, having attended this excursion the year before the data were collected allowed me a certain prolonged engagement, which Lincoln and Guba (1985) defined as “long enough to be able to survive without challenge while existing in that culture” (p. 302). Having previously attended this excursion, I was aware of the intensity of the itineraries and “how things went” on a typical day with typical students, teachers, and chaperones. Moreover, on the previous year I participated in observation and constant recording of field notes, so I had paid more attention to the students in their environment than I might have, otherwise. Next, Lincoln

and Guba (1985) stated that the purpose of persistent observation is to identify those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem and focus on them in detail (p. 304). The other research team members and myself persistently observed, talked about, and thought about our research. By doing this, we identified that the elements of the situation most relevant to my research were those of the child co-researchers. We then adjusted our 2016 excursion to focus on those aspects in detail. Erickson (1985) argued that such focus is a strength, because “framing research questions explicitly and seeking relevant data deliberately enable and empower intuition, rather than stifle it” (p. 72). Additionally, I triangulated by using different data sources: transcribed research conversations and post-excursion comments (see Erickson, 1985, p. 72; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 306-307).

Second, I refined working ideas as more information became available, using negative case analysis. This echoes Erickson’s (2004) advice to refine conceptual models as more information becomes available. Lincoln and Guba (1985) called negative case analysis the process of revising ideas with hindsight (p. 309). My ideas, housed in my conceptual model and starter codebook, were that the young co-researchers would say *something* about the research they conducted: any part of the research they conducted or would like to conduct, or about themselves as researchers. As later chapters reveal, children did discuss the research. Yet, my assumptions about the strategies for co-research were challenged. For example, while we worked to ensure that the youth grasped the idea of consent, it became evident that at least one student did not fully understand. Additionally, findings revealed aspects that I had not considered, including the adolescents’ views of the effort involved in conducting research.

Finally, preliminary findings are available for checking against raw data, as recommended by referential adequacy. This project was well suited for referential adequacy

checks for two reasons. One, since this was an offshoot of a larger, ongoing project, the data was stored in a manner accessible to other research team members. Two, using a cloud-based qualitative software program to store and analyze the data kept the materials accessible to the other researchers (to the extent allowed by the Institutional Review Board).

Turning to transferability, it “depends on a richness of description and interpretation that makes a particular case interesting and relevant to those in other situations” (Richards, 2003, p. 286). Lincoln and Guba (1985) insisted that transferability hinges on the researcher providing “the thick description necessary to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be completed as a possibility” (p. 316). In interdisciplinary research such as this, placing transferability in the hands of the reader is essential. If I, as author, were to decide which information a reader would need, I would ignore and isolate other sets of readers who might find the research applicable. My job, then, was to provide thick and detailed description, with the “widest possible range of information” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). In this and following chapters, I provide context and detailed descriptions intended to make transferability possible.

Lastly, dependability and confirmability are “assessed in terms of the documentation of research design, data, analysis, reflection, and so on, so that the researcher’s decisions are open to others” (Richards, 2003, p. 286). Although there are several lesser techniques for determining one or the other, Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend the use of an inquiry audit to determine both dependability and confirmability (p. 318). Dovetailing with the audit are the methods of triangulation and keeping a reflexive journal. As mentioned previously, Erickson (1996) and Ravitch and Riggan (2012) also espouse this kind of researcher reflexivity. To accomplish this, I provided an audit trail through which my dissertation advisor might determine dependability and

confirmability. To do this, I shared my work within the secure, cloud-based folders in which I placed inquiry audit items. Included were data sets, both raw and transcribed; narrative descriptions; the initial codebook; evolving codebooks downloaded from the software program; matrices describing coding schemes, with definitions and examples; downloads of codes and excerpts of data to which they were applied; a spreadsheet tracking young co-researchers, including pseudonyms and data artifacts; notes from conversations with my advisor; and a running memo to self in which I documented analytic thoughts, ideas, and decisions (see Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 319-320; Miles et al., 2014). This seems like a lot of information, but as Erickson (1985) noted, the researcher must collect enough evidence to confirm or negate key assertions (pp. 72-73).

In conclusion, I employed the above methods in order to analyze the data collected and generate interpretations and findings. It is my aim for this study to provide a resource for researchers in a variety of fields who wish to collaborate with child co-researchers. The following chapters examine the findings of this study, discuss their place within the current literature, and examine implications for further research.

Table 3. Initial Codebook and Definitions

Category	Code	Definition
Research Process	TA- Agenda	Child describes generating or modifying research questions, or desire to generate or modify questions.
	TA- Understanding	Child describes understanding/desire to understand project goals and children's roles.
	TA- Consent	Child describes opting in or opting out of research activities.
	RD-Planning	Child describes participating/desire to participate in research planning, instrument design, or participant selection.
	RD-Data Collection	Child describes/suggests data collection strategies.
	RD-Training	Child describes desire for/ or actual research training and support.
	DA-Data Sharing	Child describes sharing/wanting to share data collected between adult and child researchers.
	DA- Interpretation	Child offers some interpretation of/desire to interpret data collected.
	DI-Inward	Child mentions prospective findings of research project.
	DI-Outward	Child mentions idea of sharing findings with others or seeking broader impact.

Table 3 (Continued)

Category	Code	Definition
Child as Researcher	Self-as- Researcher	Child describes experience/opinion of being a researcher.
Child Tourist Experience	Self-as-Tourist	Child describes site, interpretation, or excursion experience.

4.0 FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings uncovered while following the research plan presented in Chapter 3. To recall, this study addresses the following research questions: a) How do young co-researchers on a school excursion describe the different parts of the research process or co-research strategies identified in Chapter 2?; and b) What do these young co-researchers say about themselves as researchers? The first question addresses the practical aspects of co-research. The second question addresses the students' experiences as researchers. As described in Chapter 3, two data sets were analyzed: research conversations and comments in response to a prompt. The research conversations took place on the first day of the four-day trip, immediately following the students' first research experience. This initial experience occurred at the Flight 93 National Memorial, where pairs or triads of students were assigned iPads and asked to use the SonicPics application to take photographs of their choosing, then narrate a description for each photo.

The second data set (a written response to the prompt, "People will ask you about your experience being a researcher. What would you tell them?") was generated two weeks after the completion of the trip. A teacher in the students' history class distributed the comment forms, which were subsequently mailed to the university research team.

In total, the first data set consists of 18 research conversations, representing discussions with 20 girls and 13 boys. The second data set consists of 52 written comments, representing the thoughts of 20 girls and 32 boys. The two data sets represent data from 59 individual students; 20 of whom participated in both the research conversation and the written comment. In this dissertation, all of the young co-researchers' names have been replaced with pseudonyms, in accordance with University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board guidelines. Due to child protection protocols, this section does not include information that could be used to identify each child.

The following sections address the research questions. Section 4.2 addresses young co-researchers' comments regarding the research process. Section 4.3 explores how the students described themselves as researchers after their first research experience, and then two weeks after the excursion was complete. Finally, Section 4.4 summarizes the findings presented in this chapter.

4.2 YOUNG CO-RESEARCHERS DESCRIBE THE RESEARCH PROCESS

This section addresses the first research question: How do young co-researchers on a school excursion describe the different parts of the research process or co-research strategies identified in Chapter 2? Young co-researchers' comments about the study's topic and aims are followed by their thoughts on research design and data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and dissemination.

As mentioned previously, the adolescents in this study were most involved in the data collection phase of the research process. However, analysis of the data revealed that students

mentioned *all* phases of the research process: they thought about the current study, future studies that they might design, or what might happen with the data that they collected. The following subsections follow the structure of the conceptual model, presenting findings related to each phase of the research process.

4.2.1 Young Co-Researchers Explore Topic and Aims of Research

The first section of the model presented in Chapter 2 encompasses a study's topic and aims, including research questions, roles of researchers, and research goals. The model outlines certain ways in which child co-researchers might be involved in this phase. Children might influence research questions, or at least they might express an understanding of the goals of a study (Hart, 1992; Jones, 2004; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008). Similarly, children might understand their roles and what it means to consent to act as researchers (Christensen & Prout, 2002). Adult researchers may facilitate children's consent by monitoring whether they wish to continue and ensuring that they have the freedom to opt out at any point in the study (Christensen & Prout, 2002; Einarsdóttir, 2007; Hart, 1992; Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Pinter, 2014; Pinter & Zandian, 2014). In this study, our young counterparts did not shape the agenda, nor did they modify research questions. Yet, some students did communicate an understanding of the aims of the study. They also discussed the notion of consent.

4.2.1.1 “There’s isn’t really much research about this” : Young co-researchers discuss exploratory aim of study.

Research conversations took place immediately after the first research experience. At this point, several students made comments referring to the study's topic and aims. Most commonly

mentioned was the exploratory aspect of the study. Before I (RP) had a chance to turn on the recorder, Andrew and Brandon started offering opinions about the exploratory nature of the study:

Andrew: There isn't really much research about this, so it'd be great to really know what's right and know what's wrong about these D trips – these D.C. trips, so they can make them better.

RP: You know, I don't think [the recorder] got your initials. Can you do it one more time?

[boys state their initials]

RP: And you were saying that people don't really know about the research trips, right? So, and you were saying that it was cool - ?

Brandon: It's cool because we're like the first group to really do this and no other research projects going on in the world.

Boys and girls alike noted the exploratory aspect of the study. On the girls' bus, Zoe asked Victoria one of the suggested questions. Victoria thought back to her experience just a few minutes before, as she explored the Flight 93 National Memorial with iPad in hand:

Zoe: What do you think it's going to be like to be a researcher?

Victoria: Um, well, we've already done a little bit so far, and I think it's really cool, because ... we're the first couple kids in the world to be able to do this.

In another conversation on the boys' bus, Frank and Ethan discussed why they eagerly anticipated co-researching. Frank noted that prior studies involved older students, not young adolescents like those in their class:

We had gotten the thing and I was like, and they had told us how only, they had only really interviewed college students who had more experience with the topic, but not like eighth grade and seventh grade, who haven't really had much experience, and how it affected them, so I thought it would be interesting.

Ethan agreed, “I thought it would be really fun to do. ‘Cause [sic], we’re one of the first to - we’re one of the first middle schoolers [sic] to do it.” Throughout the research conversations, young co-researchers of both genders eagerly anticipated the exploratory nature of the study – mentioning that it would be “fun,” “cool,” or “interesting.” After the study was complete, only Jenna wrote about the study’s topic, “I think the research question was a good topic, but I personally just didn’t like it.”

While young co-researchers in this study did not have an opportunity to choose the overall research question, they did express an understanding of the exploratory nature of this study. This was one of our goals. Like prior researchers, we met with the young researchers before and during the study to make sure aims and roles were clear (Chen et al., 2010; Coppock, 2011; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010). We also wanted to ensure that the young co-researchers fully understood the study and their roles, so that we could feel confident about having gained their consent to research alongside us. In the field, however, some misconceptions about consent became apparent.

4.2.1.2 “I decided to be a researcher on this trip because...” : Young co-researchers discuss consent.

As presented in the model, consent falls within the topic and aims phase of the research process. As noted in the model, adult/child co-research collaborations should include child counterparts who understand their roles and who are provided opportunities to opt out of any research activity (Christensen & Prout, 2002; Einarsdóttir, 2007; Hart, 1992; Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Pinter, 2014; Pinter & Zandian, 2014). In our study, we worked diligently to establish research roles and understanding of consent before the excursion began. In our pre-trip training sessions, we provided information about the data collection activities, and we repeatedly reinforced that the

young people were welcome to opt out of any research activity at any time. We gained consent before the trip took place, and we gained consent before research activities, such as the research conversations. As Parsons, Sherwood, and Abbott (2016) suggested, the option to opt-out led young researchers to withdraw from certain activities, which in turn created challenges for us as adults (i.e., we would have preferred that the same students who participated in research conversations also completed the post-trip comment). Kirby et al. (2003) noted that children's feelings of comfort with research situations may influence levels of participation. We noticed that more girls than boys were willing to talk with us in research conversations. Yet later, both girls and boys expressed that they valued the opportunity to have their voices heard.

Students gave a variety of descriptions about why they chose to participate in the study or how they made their decisions to act as researchers. These ranged from feeling "inspired" to feeling that they "had to." When I asked why he chose to become a researcher in this project, Ethan laughed and admitted that the decision was spontaneous:

RP: How did you... decide that you wanted to do the research part of the trip?

Ethan: I honestly had no idea I was going to do it until I walked into the school [on the day of the pre-trip information session]. [Laughs]

Emily's decision to participate was also based on the information session, as she explained to Faith. On the girls' bus, Faith read a suggested question to Emily:

Faith: How did you decide to be a researcher on this trip? On the trip?

Emily: I was inspired by the workers to come to our school and tell us about researching so we can get into it and it seemed pretty - pretty cool.

Some students consented because they wanted to better remember their experience. On the boy's bus, I struggled to record Kyle's quiet voice over background chatter:

RP: Ok - looks like we're getting you. That's good....[noise] How did you... decide that you wanted to [be a researcher] on the trip?

[loud conversation in background]

Kyle: So I can uh, remember what I said...what I thought about my trip.

Similarly, Abigail explained that being able to recall her trip played a role in her decision to co-research: "I thought about would I like it better if I was taking pictures, and writing it down how I felt? Or just taking a picture and just remembering the moment and not how I felt?" By contrast, Hunter, whose friends did not join him in the research conversation, told me that consented "just 'cause [sic] everyone else was doing it."

Other research conversations revealed that some young co-researchers, specifically girls, did not seem to have a clear understanding of consent. On the girls' bus, Faith answered that she "[didn't] know" why she chose to conduct research for this study. Similarly, Julia recognized, "I didn't really want to, but I just did it." Another research conversation was particularly interesting. Two of my fellow university researchers (URs) coordinated a research conversation involving Natalie and Grace. Reading the suggested questions, Grace interviewed Natalie:

Grace: How did you decide to be a researcher on the trip?

Natalie: Um, I thought that we had to, so I did it.

UR 1: Oh? Uh oh!

Natalie: Honestly. [laughs]

Grace: That's not a [sic] answer.

UR 2: It's a great answer, honestly.

UR 1: Yeah, but you know that you don't have to.

Natalie: Yeah.

UR 1: Ok.

We do not know why girls in particular seemed to struggle with the concept of consent. As noted in the literature review, prior adult/child research collaborations have also struggled with establishing a clear idea of consent (see for example, Porter & Abane, 2008). While we provided pre-excursion training and reminders during the trip, Natalie still seemed confused about whether or not she “had to” participate in co-research activities. This echoes Einarsdóttir (2007), who argued that adults can never really know if children understand enough about research to realize to what they are consenting. Although we followed Einarsdóttir’s (2007) advice and reminded our young colleagues that they might opt out of any activity, consent and what it means remained unclear for some students. Yet, for whatever reason, many young co-researchers opted in to data collection activities, including using iPads and post-visit comment sheets. Their resulting comments are discussed in the following subsection.

4.2.2 Young Co-Researchers Discuss Research Design and Data Collection

As presented in the model, research design and data collection makes up the second phase of the research process. This phase includes the concepts of child-planned research, instrument design, and participant selection. It also includes strategies of offering multiple data collection activities for child researchers and using natural rather than contrived settings for data collection (Pinter & Zandian, 2014). Finally, it includes providing research training and support for children (Einarsdóttir, 2007; Jones, 2004; Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Pinter, 2014; Pinter & Zandian, 2014).

In this study, students were most involved in data collection, as they used iPads to take photographs and record corresponding captions. They also completed post-visit comment sheets,

and they were offered the opportunity to contribute data through the research conversations and final comments, which are analyzed for this study (see Table 2). In addition, young researchers were asked if they would like to suggest a question for their fellow students, giving them the opportunity to influence the design of the data collection instruments. Finally, university research team members provided pre-excursion training sessions and on-the-spot research support to young researchers during the excursion. Young researchers had the most to say about questions they might ask their classmates and their data collection experiences with iPads and post-visit comment sheets. A few students also mentioned the training sessions and how they might design their own studies.

4.2.2.1 “What did you think?” : Young co-researchers suggest questions to ask classmates.

In research conversations, university researchers asked young co-researchers to suggest questions to ask their fellow students later in the trip. Both boys and girls responded with general questions; these included asking their peers about their favorite, most memorable, most interesting, or overall experiences on the excursion. Like several others, Isaiah said that he would ask his classmates, “What did you think about the trip altogether?” Hannah echoed several of her peers when she mentioned that she would ask her fellow students about their favorite memories. She explained her reason to the university researchers:

UR:...Anything else that you can think of?...

Hannah:...I feel like if you say like, their favorite one, it makes them go more in-depth, usually.

UR: Does it? Oh.

4.2.2.2 “A little awkward...but then i also think it’s going to be fun” : Young co-researchers comment about data collection.

In addition to suggesting questions for this study, young co-researchers provided valuable feedback on data collection tools and methods. To recall, students were asked to record iPad photos with narrations at each site, write responses to prompts in a post-visit comment sheets, participate in research conversations while on the buses, and to provide a written comment two weeks after the trip was completed. Young researchers’ comments about data collection fell into two categories: comments about the iPads and comments about the post-visit comment sheets. These comments came from boys and girls, and they appeared in both data sets. Overall, students made many more positive than negative comments.

The two data sets provided an interesting time point perspective on the young co-researchers’ feelings about data collection. The research conversations took place immediately after the first data collection experience with the iPads, and after they would have completed, at most, two comment sheets. The comments occurred two weeks after the excursion, during which they had many subsequent data collection experiences. The research conversations illustrate the young co-researchers’ expectations about what they thought data collection would be like, based on their first experiences. The comments convey their feelings after the trip was complete.

Initial reactions to the post-visit comment sheets questions included thoughts that they would be interesting or fun, they would help the students learn or notice more than they would have otherwise, or that they would help them to better remember their trip. In my conversation with Frank and Ethan, Frank had been doing all the talking. I turned to Ethan to ask what he had

to add. This became an opportunity to provide a little research instruction within our conversation:

RP: [points microphone at Ethan] What do you think?

Ethan: I think [the post visit comment sheet] does challenge people to learn, but it also makes it a little more fun, because you get to express what you want to say. And it's not yes or no, whatever these people think.

RP: Yeah, that's the - that's actually part of the design. It's called an open-ended question. You've probably heard of those.

Frank: Mmhmm.

Ethan: Yeah.

In her research conversation, Paige expressed a similar feeling about the open-ended design, noting that it “makes you open up about how you feel.” Julia, alone, expressed dissent. While she admitted that “the [post-visit comment sheets] were easy,” she also confessed, “I just don't like writing a lot.”

The iPads were discussed in both the research conversations and in the comments. After their first experience using the iPads at the Flight 93 National Memorial, several young people expressed ambivalence about taking pictures and recording captions in public. Natalie's comment provides a representative example of the feelings expressed by several of the young co-researchers, “I think that it'd be a little awkward to just sit there and record, but then I also think it's going to be fun. [pause] Awkward!” In the same conversation, Grace agreed, “I figure it'd be fun to take pictures, but like - not to talk.”

Two weeks later, after many opportunities to research with the devices, comments reflected that several students enjoyed the iPad data collection experience. Back at school after the excursion, Kayla remarked that, “It was really fun and cool to use the ipad [sic].” Lucas

agreed, “Taking pictures of all the cool sights you got to see was actually pretty cool.” Brandon even wished that he had more access to the iPad, so that he “could take more pictures.” Yet, some students found the iPads burdensome. Andrew noted, “getting the ipads [sic] was king of annoying.” To solve this problem, Leah recommended that “a smaller device for research would be better.”

The variety of comments in response to data collection tools and methods reiterates the need for multiple data collection strategies when working with child researchers, as recommended by Pinter and Zandian (2014). Also of note, while we trained the students to audio record descriptions for their photos, we later discovered that several students taught themselves how to type captions, instead. This echoes Merewether and Fleet’s (2013) suggestion to allow children to collect data in settings that seem natural to them. In our study, young co-researchers created their own natural setting, or data collection method, by altering the way in which they collected the data (i.e., by typing, rather than speaking, into an electronic device). For youth of today, typing into an electronic device has become more natural than talking into one (Blair, Fletcher, & Gaskin, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2013).

4.2.2.3 Other mentions of research design and data collection.

As discussed in a prior section, some students also mentioned the training sessions in the context of consent. In addition, a few students provided thoughts about how they might design their own studies. Interestingly, in separate conversations, both Chloe and Elizabeth suggested pre-test/post-test designs, in which adult researchers would ask questions of their young collaborators in training sessions and again, after the excursion had concluded. For example:

UR: [Can you] think of a question you want to add?

Elizabeth: I think maybe, um....Ok. I think maybe on the first question when it asks what to say before we reach it, almost like, have it where it says, like, how do you feel about Flight 93 before like actually seeing it, the site?

UR: Oh, yeah.

Elizabeth: So something like explaining --

UR: Prediction of it.

Elizabeth: Yeah, like what you - how you think about it then, and then the next one could be like how you think about it afterwards.

UR: Oh, is that interesting.

Elizabeth: Mmhmm.

Young co-researchers had the most hands-on involvement with data collection, and they mentioned it more than any other part of the research process. Throughout, young co-researchers offered advice about how to improve this study or how to design future studies. This is similar to what occurred when Pinter and Zandian (2015) presented their findings at a follow-up session with young children. Our experience was similar to theirs; when we asked, our young counterparts were happy to recommend changes to the study.

Rather than just serving as “subjects” or “objects” of a study, children who co-research have the agency to recommend changes to a study or follow-up studies to undertake in the future (Christensen & James, 2008; Einarsdóttir, 2007; Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008; Kellett, 2005; Lund et al., 2016; Punch, 2002; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008). It follows that child co-researchers are empowered as social actors, encouraged to express their own ideas (Merewether & Fleet, 2013). To treat young colleagues as social actors means embracing their ideas and their own worlds of meaning (Christensen & Prout, 2002; Darbyshire, MacDougall, & Schiller, 2005; Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Pinter, 2014). Two young people in this study shared with us meaning they created from their experience on this excursion. The following section describes

what these students had to say about data analysis and interpretation, the third phase of the research process.

4.2.3 Young Co-Researchers Conceptualize Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis and interpretation comprises the third phase of the research process as presented in the model. As discussed in the model, this phase offers several ways in which young people may serve as co-researchers of a study. Children may volunteer suggestions about what is important in the data, and their interpretations may be captured in context, rather than after the data is collected (Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Pinter, 2014; Pinter & Zandian, 2014). Additionally, adult and child co-researchers may share and discuss the data throughout the data collection process (Einarsdóttir, 2007).

In our study, young co-researchers were not explicitly involved in data analysis and interpretation. However, a couple of students offered their interpretations in research conversations immediately following their visit to the Flight 93 National Memorial. While these represent the voices of only some of the students in this study, I include these for a specific reason: these examples provide evidence that while young co-researchers might only be involved in one or two phases of a research study, they *think about* other parts of the research process.

Immediately after their first data collection experience at the Flight 93 National Memorial, some young co-researchers began to formulate interpretations. Specifically, they began to wonder whether their experiences as young tourists differed from those of individuals who remembered 9/11, or who were in some way connected to tragic events commemorated at sites of painful heritage. In our conversation, David stated his interpretation:

David: [I would like to know] maybe just like the differences, like in the tourists. Like, like the tourists and the people that actually experienced it as like family members.

RP: Like you might - like the differences between you, not related to the event and someone - ?

David: Like [the difference between] seeing it and --- experiencing it.

In conversation on the girls' bus, Zoe reached a similar interpretation:

I [wonder]... if [connections change the experience], like I guess if your family was part of 9/11, or, if you connect with it, or something. Or if you have ancestors from like the Holocaust, and when we go to the Holocaust museum, if you can connect to some of that.

At the same time, but in different conversations on separate buses, these two young researchers offered this interpretation: perhaps personal connections change the tourist experience at sites of painful heritage. These spontaneous interpretations further reinforce the argument that children belong in collaborative co-research, in any or all phases of the research process (Jones, 2004; Oakley, 1994). This interpretation also reinforces the idea that young co-researchers may conceptualize parts of the research process with which they are not formally involved. We did not ask them to analyze the data they had started to collect. Yet, some had already noticed patterns and made initial interpretations.

Additionally, I include these interpretations for another reason: adults write research articles, or in this case, dissertations. By default, it is the adult researcher's voice that is heard (Coppock, 2011; Mayall, 1994). In this study, young researchers began to make interpretations while collecting the data, reinforcing recommendations from Einarsdóttir (2007) and Merewether and Fleet (2013) that children be encouraged to make interpretations before the data collection is complete. While some young co-researchers began to interpret the data they collected, others considered what might happen with findings after the study was complete.

4.2.4 Young Co-Researchers Contemplate Dissemination

As presented in the model, dissemination of findings comprises the fourth and final phase of the research process. The dissemination phase of research is bidirectional, containing concepts of inward and outward sharing of findings (Alderson, 2008; Christensen & Prout, 2002). Inward refers to children receiving some version of the findings of the study in which they research (Alderson, 2008; Christensen & Prout, 2002). Outward involves discussion between adults and children about broader implications of their research (Alderson, 2008).

At the time of this excursion, young co-researchers had not yet been involved in dissemination. Yet, a few young co-researchers mentioned both inward and outward concepts of dissemination. Like the comments illustrating students' interpretations, I include these comments about dissemination because they illustrate that young co-researchers conceptualized all phases of the research process, even those in which they were not yet involved.

Inward-focused dissemination was mentioned in a conversation on the boys' bus. Logan and Michael discussed that they would like to see the results of their research efforts:

Logan: Uh, it'll be fun, 'cause [sic] we'll get to look back on it at times, and when we see all the data that was collected, we'll be able to see what people thought about it, and it'll be cool...

Michael: Pretty much, yeah.

In a different conversation, Christopher thought about outward dissemination of the research, beyond the limits of this study to researchers worldwide. After noting the exploratory nature of this study, he added, "I think that researchers are going to be thrilled, and um, just happy to see the results." Christopher expressed interest in the impact of his research on the scholarly community.

Whether inward or outward, these conversations illustrate that some young co-researchers considered dissemination, even though they were not yet involved in that aspect of the research study. Like the children in studies by Evans (2016) and Pinter and Zandian (2015), young co-researchers looked forward to later reviewing the findings from their study. While Christopher's anticipation was not phrased in terms commonly used by adult researchers (e.g., grants, journal articles, or conference presentations) his desire for broader impact was clear.

While young people in our study were mostly involved in data collection, they spoke about and thought about all phases of the research process. Young co-researchers conceptualized topics they might explore, studies they might design, interpretations they might make, and what they might do with what they find. Children who think about and act within research studies in this way help to shape research into something that is child-centered, child-benefitting, and child-focused (Christensen & Prout, 2002; Oakley, 1994; Pinter, 2014).

Beyond talking about the process of research, young co-researchers also discussed their expectations and revelations about doing research and of themselves as researchers. The following section addresses the second research question. Young co-researchers' expectations are presented first, followed by their revelations after their excursion was complete.

4.3 YOUNG CO-RESEARCHERS DESCRIBE THEMSELVES AS RESEARCHERS

This section addresses the question: "What do these young co-researchers say about themselves as researchers?" This question encompasses both the experience of *conducting research* and of taking on the *role of researcher*. Serving as co-researchers alongside adults was a new experience for these young researchers. For some of these young teenagers, it brought to mind

their prior experiences with research. A few young co-researchers specifically mentioned prior library or Internet research, or designing classroom surveys. Yet, the students recognized the differences between their past research experiences and this study. Like Jacob, several pointed out that as co-researchers they were “actually getting to do the research, instead of, like, reading the research.”

The two data sets in this study allow for comparison of the young researchers’ comments immediately following their first data collection experience, to those they made later, after multiple such experiences. Comparing expectations of the research experience to revelations afterward provides an illuminating perspective. Section 4.3.1 presents young researchers’ expectations of the experience, and Section 4.3.2 presents young researchers’ revelations after the research experience was complete.

4.3.1 Young Co-Researchers Share Expectations of the Research Experience

As mentioned in prior chapters, one goal of this study is to provide a first glimpse into children’s descriptions of conducting research on a school excursion and of themselves as co-researchers. Prior research studies have not explored children’s expectations of the co-research experience or of an excursion that incorporates it.

After their first co-research experience, the young researchers in this study voiced their hopes for the excursion. General positive expectations were expressed most often. The most common were hopes that that co-research would be “cool” or “fun.” Hannah concurred with many of her classmates when she remarked that, “I guess it’s pretty cool to do.”

Beyond simply stating positive expectations, some students elaborated. Their comments reflect prior literature about co-research empowering children to act as social actors (Christensen

& Prout, 2002). Subsection 4.3.1.1 explores the young co-researchers' expectations of the co-research experience and the ways in which those expectations reflect the literature about empowerment as social actors. Then, subsection 4.3.1.2 explores young co-researchers' expectations of ways in which co-research would enhance their school excursion.

4.3.1.1 “Actually getting to do the research” : Young co-researchers as social actors.

Young researchers expressed positive expectations of their co-research experience. These expectations align with the idea of co-research empowering children as social actors. Adults who desire to co-research with children should acknowledge that children are capable of expressing agency, forming opinions, and creating their own meanings (Christensen & Prout, 2002; Darbyshire et al., 2005; Pinter, 2014). When adults acknowledge that their child collaborators are social actors, the adults in the study take responsibility *for*, rather than *away from* children (Christensen & Prout, 2002, p. 479). While this viewpoint recognizes the inherent advantages of the adult in the situation (e.g., education, social standing, power, and influence), children are viewed in terms of their commonalities with adults, rather than their differences. Children are not seen as vulnerable or incompetent; they are recognized as having their own experience and understanding. They are viewed as capable and their opinions and thoughts are valued to the same degree as those of adults. Adults acknowledge that children take action, they participate, they change, and they become changed by the world and their experiences within it (Christensen & Prout, 2002, pp. 479-480). These criteria form the basis of the idea that young co-researchers are not miniature adults; rather, they are fellow human beings with unique viewpoints and valuable experiences (Christensen & Prout, 2002; Darbyshire et al., 2005; Pinter, 2014).

In this study, 13-15 year olds were actively involved as co-researchers. Their expectations of the research experience reflect their idea that they would actively collaborate with their adult colleagues, rather than as subjects or objects of research (see Christensen & James, 2008; Darbyshire et al., 2005; Einarsdóttir, 2007; Lund et al., 2016; Oakley, 1994; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008). Their comments reflect that they anticipated the opportunity to meaningfully contribute as helpers, to research autonomously, and to express their thoughts and opinions to adults who wanted to listen.

In the research conversations, young co-researchers specifically mentioned helping. They noted that they wanted to help memorials and museums, the university researchers with whom they worked, or future generations of students. Brandon explained why he expected that being a researcher would allow him to help:

RP: Do you think it will give you a different perspective... as a researcher, as opposed to a tourist?

Brandon: Yeah...because we'll be helping other people. Like help them know what kids want to see to help give a better experience to kids coming after us.

In a separate conversation, David echoed an expectation to help. David wanted to help university researchers:

RP: So...why did you [decide to be a researcher]?

David: It can... help, it can help like... the universities, like, figure stuff out...like, future stuff.

These and other sentiments reflect the young people's expectations that their help was an essential part of the study, and that their perspectives were both valuable and different from those of adults (see Alderson, 2004; Docherty & Sandelowski, 1999; Kellett, 2005; Mayall, 2008; Scott, 2008).

On several occasions, students mentioned that doing research would allow them more autonomy or freedom than they would otherwise have had on this excursion. In a conversation with a fellow university researcher, Chloe stated that she had conducted some kinds of research in the past, but she expected this experience to be different:

UR: Have you - Did you do little surveys or anything?

Chloe: We have done surveys, yeah.

UR: Yeah. And this kind of research is different, isn't it? It's not- It's not-

Chloe: Yeah. 'Cause [sic] it's like, hands-on, like, you do it yourself. Not just, like, written questions, and you have to answer them.

Later, Chloe expressed the uniqueness of this hands-on experience: "Cause [sic] not a lot of people get to - experience it, like, themselves." In another conversation, Destiny expressed a similar viewpoint: "It's not - It's not like when you go look it up on a computer. You actually have to go experience it." On the boys' bus, Jacob and I had a similar discussion.

RP: So what do you think it's going to be like...doing the research?

Jacob: Uh, I think it's probably going to be pretty cool. The - to - actually getting to do the research, instead of like reading the research -

RP: Mmhmm. [nods]

Jacob: [nods] We're getting to *do* it.

This expectation of autonomy reflects the students' roles as co-researching social actors, who were trusted to take action and contribute their own valuable experiences and understandings.

Finally, one young co-researcher expected that doing research would allow him to express his opinions, feelings, and thoughts to people who wanted to hear them. Hunter expressed that he expected the research experience to be "cool," because "most people...don't

have those people [who] write down how they feel and stuff.” This excerpt hints at the idea of child’s voice - valuing children’s thoughts and expressions (see Christensen & Prout, 2002; Pinter & Zandian, 2015). This comment is included here because after they returned home, more young researchers noted that “being heard” was an important part of their experience.

These desires - to help, to act autonomously, and to be heard - closely echo the literature about children as social actors (Christensen & Prout, 2002; Darbyshire et al., 2005; Pinter, 2014). In return for working as researchers alongside adults, these young co-researchers expected an enhanced experience. The following subsection explores these young peoples’ ideas about ways in which co-research would enhance their school excursion.

4.3.1.2 “Different [from] being a tourist” : Expecting an enhanced excursion.

As mentioned previously, young co-researchers expected to have the ability to help, the autonomy to act, and the freedom to express themselves that came with serving as co-researchers. They expected co-research to lead them to learn more, think more deeply, and therefore to have a more interesting experience. Prior research has not investigated children’s expectations of the co-research experience. Yet, these comments closely echo those made by students in this study who discussed its exploratory nature, previously discussed in Section 4.2.1.1.

Multiple young co-researchers mentioned expecting to learn more or to think more deeply for having conducted research on this trip. In describing the differences between this excursion and a normal school trip, Christopher and David explained why they would think more as co-researchers:

RP: Do you think there is going to be any part of... doing the research...that will make you look at things differently?

Christopher: Yeah, a little bit, probably. 'Cause [sic] some questions are asked, we might not have ever thought of.

David: Yeah.

Christopher: And we'd like to go deeper in thinking and it could reveal different stuff that we haven't seen.

RP: Ok.

David: Yeah, I get that there's, like, different questions that we don't think of.

RP: So, different [from] being a tourist?

David: Yeah.

From David and Christopher's viewpoints, being asked questions by their fellow researchers would make them think more deeply and see things differently. This reflects our methodological decision to use multiple data collection techniques (Pinter & Zandian, 2014), and it seems to have enhanced the experience for these young co-researchers.

In a different conversation, Frank told me that learning and thinking would make his experience more fun:

I think it's going to be fun, just because we get to learn about all these topics, and kind of learn about stuff that we didn't know before....and then kind of think about how it would affect us, and other people.

Frank's description of learning and thinking may connect to the other students' desire to help, as he thought about how what he learned would affect himself and other people. On the girls' bus, Lauren expressed a similar comment: "I think being a researcher will be fun because you'll be able to learn new stuff and figure out things you never knew."

Other young co-researchers also expected this trip to be more interesting than if they had not researched. In one of the first research conversations recorded on the boy's bus, Isaiah gave his rationale for thinking this experience would be interesting:

RP: So how did you decide you wanted to be a researcher on this trip?

Isaiah: Um – to - [pauses] I thought it would be interesting to record important information.

RP: So.. what do you think it's going to be like, doing the research?

Isaiah: Um...mostly...revealing [shrugs]

This comment reflects that Isaiah expected to have his experience enhanced by having an important job to do. Similar to other students' comments about helping, this statement also reflects prior literature that co-research may move young researchers beyond tokenism into real, collaborative roles in a research study (see Alderson, 2008; Hart, 1992).

These findings provide a first look at what young people who co-research expect the experience to be like. Young co-researchers expected an interesting, enriched learning experience, which came from opportunities to help, to act autonomously, and to be heard. Their expectations of this experience align with prior literature. Prior researchers have theorized that children who co-research might experience the empowerment of acting as social actors, whose thoughts, feelings, and interpretations are valued alongside those of their adult partners (Christensen & Prout, 2002; Clark, 2010; Pinter & Zandian, 2015). With co-research strategies, children progress beyond the roles of subjects, objects, or tokens, and into roles of research collaborators (Alderson, 2008; Hart, 1992). With their expectations stated, the following subsections turn to young co-researchers' revelations about the research experience.

4.3.2 Young Co-Researchers Share Revelations about the Research Experience

Two weeks after returning home, young co-researchers expressed a variety of feelings about themselves as researchers and the activity of conducting research. In all, the research experience

was mentioned often in the comments collected two weeks after the excursion. This is unsurprising, as the prompt asked students how they might describe their experience to others.

Post-trip comments were overwhelmingly positive. Some students discussed revelations relating to previously expressed expectations of the experience. More commented about the experience of being “listened to,” and having their thoughts and opinions valued. Finally, some young co-researchers discussed the “work” of doing research.

4.3.2.1 “Research instead of just looking around” : Revelations about the research experience.

A comparison of young co-researchers’ expectations of the research experience to their revelations afterward reveals that some of the students thought the experience met their expectations. Young co-researchers had expected to be able to help institutions, university researchers, and future generations. After the excursion, some commented that the aspect of helping was a part of their experience that they would tell other people. Ian commented, “I enjoyed it very well because I got to help People [sic] with their study!” Elizabeth added, “I liked the talking about things the Mueseums [sic] should change, just so more people can enjoy it better than I ~~ean~~ [sic] did.” These comments reflect that the co-research experience left some students feeling empowered and able to affect change. These feelings of being capable of affecting the world around oneself reflect the literature about co-research embracing children as social actors (Christensen & Prout, 2002).

At the start of the trip, several young co-researchers mentioned that they looked forward to acting autonomously. After the trip was complete, a few mentioned that they appreciated the independence. Stephanie echoed her classmate with her comment, “it was fun being able to do some things on my own.” We do not know whether the ability to act autonomously was

something that students expected but did not experience, or whether they did not find it worth mentioning in the brief post-trip comment. The idea of autonomy plays a role in considering co-researchers as social actors (Christensen & Prout, 2002), and it may be worth further exploration in follow up studies.

In addition, several young co-researchers had hoped for an enhanced excursion, one in which they would think and learn and have an interesting experience. Some expressed simple comments about thinking more as a researcher than they would have as a tourist. Gabe and Emma expressed more complicated comments. Gabe admitted that he “didn’t enjoy doing the research, but it made [him] stop and think about what really happened at the monument.” Similarly, Emma seemed to realize how conducting research changed her excursion experience. As she put it, “If you research instead of just looking around, you’ll pay more attention and learn more about where you’re at. You can better understand why things were made, why people did things...etc.” These comments provide a unique perspective: young people might not enjoy co-research, even when they recognize its value. When (adult) researchers discuss the benefits of co-research for children, we often neglect to discuss whether children will enjoy the experience. In contrast, the young researchers in this study did enjoy having their voices heard, perhaps more than they had dared to hope. The following subsection explores this aspect of child’s voice as found in the young co-researchers’ revelations about the research experience.

4.3.2.2 “People had to listen and wanted to listen to what I had to say” : Child’s voice and the co-research experience.

At the start of the excursion, only one young researcher expressed that he looked forward to expressing his thoughts and feelings to listening adults. After the excursion, multiple young researchers commented about having their voices heard. While boys spoke less during the

research conversations, after the trip several made positive comments about being able to contribute their thoughts and opinions. Again using the adjectives “fun” and “cool,” these boys agreed that they appreciated being heard. Providing some explanation, Trevor commented, “it was fun to tell about the different things we did.”

Girls also appreciated being heard. Along with her classmates, Kayla mentioned the enjoyment she received from expressing her voice: “I get [sic] to share what I was feeling which made me happy.” Summing it up for her peers, Elizabeth made a powerful statement, “I enjoyed it because people had to listen and wanted to listen what I had to say about everything.”

To prioritize child’s voice, Clark (2010) challenged adult researchers to consider how they might enable children to express themselves in a medium that is enjoyable for them, yet has status in the adult world. We tried to accomplish this by conducting interviews in the form of research conversations with young researchers, in groups that they chose. Interviews have long been used as a research method with children (Kerr & Price, 2018). Yet, research conversations, less formal and more child-friendly, make this something that is likely more enjoyable for young people (Dockett & Perry, 2011; Pinter & Zandian, 2014). At the same time, we offered more than one outlet for young co-researchers to express their thoughts and opinions, including journals and the iPads used for data collection. Using multiple data collection instruments with children is recommended because it accounts for children, like quiet boys in research conversations, who may not be comfortable with every type of data collection activity (Kirby et al., 2003; Merewether & Fleet, 2013). A benefit of these multiple tools is multiple opportunities for children’s voices to be heard. On the other hand, providing multiple data collection activities might increase the labor-intensive aspect of field research.

4.3.2.3 “I would not do it for a job” : Young co-researchers reveal the work of research.

Like prior researchers, we approached this study armed with the knowledge of the benefits of co-research for young researchers. We knew co-research could provide children with autonomy, respect, and senses of being valued and having their voices heard (Alderson, 2008; Kellett, 2005; Mayall, 2008; Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Scott, 2008). As previously mentioned, we carefully planned training, consent activities, multiple data collection activities, and many opportunities for collaborative efforts. Yet like prior researchers, it was impossible for us to ensure that all of our young collaborators would enjoy the experience. While most comments were overwhelmingly positive, eight negative comments alluded to the labor-intensive work of conducting research. For example, while Patrick enjoyed the research experience, he realized that it might not be a job for just anyone, “if you cant [sic] stand walking around or learning then it won’t be fun for certain people.” As Kate put it, “I’d rather enjoy what im [sic] seeing without having to stop & take pictures & talk.” Jenna agreed, “It got annoying sometimes when we had been walking around and all we wanted to do was go back on the bus, but we instead had to do research.”

Some students seemed to understand that research could be a career path – and it was not one that they would choose to pursue. Both Ryan and Madison realized that field research was an occupation that their adult research partners had chosen. Ryan’s comment, “i [sic] would not do it for a job,” echoed Madison’s, “I would not want to be one when im [sic] older.”

Comments such as these bring to mind the issue of consent. If young co-researchers truly understood how much work was involved, would they have consented? Did they realize that they might opt out of any activity, at any time? Yet while they are critical, these negative comments represent only a small portion of the young co-researchers’ post-trip comments.

Many young co-researchers expressed positive opinions of the research experience. As Nathaniel said, “I had so much fun and would love to Do It agin [sic].” While some thought it was too much work, Colin thought that the experience was “easy as long as you pay attention and just have fun.” Young researchers’ negative comments about the work of research may be related to their classmates’ comments about the cumbersomeness of the iPad as a data collection device. We do not know if decreasing the physical burden would have improved the experience, but it is a strategy worth considering.

Co-research as work – with children as co-workers – has received little mention in the research literature. With co-research adults receive the benefit of having access to children’s unique thoughts and perspectives, along with all the other professional benefits of that go along with research work (Alderson, 2004; Docherty & Sandelowski, 1999; Kellett, 2005; Mayall, 2008; Scott, 2008). At the same time, there are obvious drawbacks for adults whose research is complicated by child collaborators, including working with less competent (child) research partners (Mayall, 1994). Benefits of co-research for children include autonomy, respect, having their opinions and thoughts valued, and being heard (Alderson, 2008; Kellett, 2005; Mayall, 2008; Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Scott, 2008). Yet what are the drawbacks of co-research for children? As adult researchers are well aware, one drawback of field research is that it is labor-intensive. Field researchers struggle with unexpected difficulties, time management, logistics, exhaustion, heavy iPads, rain, broken buses, and other “annoying” aspects (Hubbard, Backett-Milburn, & Kemmer, 2001; Punch, 2012). Comments from our young research collaborators indicate that they, too, experienced the labor of field research. As Bradbury-Jones and Taylor (2015) asked, what is appropriate compensation for a child researcher? These and other

questions remain, and they are further explored in the following chapter. Below, I summarize these findings related to the two research questions.

4.4 SUMMARY AND ADDITIONAL REFLECTIONS

The first research question addressed what the young researchers might say about aspects of the research process identified in the model. For this study, young researchers were not yet involved in all parts of the research process. Yet, they *conceptualized* every part of the process: they suggested changes to this study, they thought about how they might design their own studies, they created their own interpretations, and they pondered what might happen with their findings. As Jones (2004) suggested, it appears that “all stages of a research project potentially present opportunities for the involvement of the child-researcher” (p. 117). Young researchers thought about the entire research process, whether or not they experienced it.

The second research question concerned the students’ comments about themselves as researchers. Two data sets allowed for a comparison of young peoples’ expectations of doing research to their revelations afterward. Young co-researchers expected their research experience to empower them in many of the ways anticipated in prior literature about children as social actors. Their revelations about the experience revealed that they valued having their voices heard. Yet they also commented about the work of being researchers, a finding not yet fully explored in the literature. The following chapter provides discussion of the most important findings.

5.0 DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Drawing from the findings discussed in Chapter 4, this chapter situates them in response to the prior literature. The following section provides a summary of major findings. It is followed by sections that more deeply explore the most compelling findings.

5.2 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

This study was designed to fill gaps within current knowledge about children as co-researchers. Therefore, it employed co-research strategies to provide a first glimpse into children's descriptions of conducting research on a school excursion and of themselves as co-researchers. Specifically, this study addressed the following questions: a) How do young co-researchers on a school excursion describe the different parts of the research process or co-research strategies identified in Chapter 2?; and b) What do these young co-researchers say about themselves as researchers? The first research question addressed what young researchers might say about aspects of the research process identified in the model. In this study, young researchers conceptualized every part of the process, even aspects in which they were not directly involved.

They suggested changes to this study, theorized designs for their own studies, interpreted the data they collected, and they thought about what might happen with their findings.

The second research question concerned young researchers' comments about themselves as researchers. Two data sets allowed for a comparison of their expectations of conducting research to their revelations afterward. Young co-researchers expected their research experience to empower them as social actors, who contributed meaning and exercised autonomy. They also expected to have a "fun," "cool," and interesting learning experience. Findings indicated that these youth felt empowered by co-research, and they valued having their voices heard. However, they also commented about the labor of research, a finding not yet fully explored in the literature. The following subsection explores how these findings add to prior knowledge about co-research with children. The following sections explore the most interesting of these findings in detail, discussing them in relation to prior literature.

5.3 YOUNG CO-RESEARCHERS AND THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The first research question had to do with what young researchers would say about the research process in general and co-research strategies in particular. Findings of note include: 1) young co-researchers demonstrated research competency in data collection, even modifying the data collection instrument for their comfort; 2) young co-researchers conceptualized all phases of the research process, even those in which they were not involved; and 3) young co-researchers shared different stories about their decisions to consent to this study.

5.3.1 Young Co-Researchers Modified the Data Collection Instrument

As noted in Chapter 4, the young co-researchers in this study modified the data collection instrument. In our pre-excursion training and classroom session, we taught the students to audio record their captions into the iPad. As shown in Chapter 4, several students found this awkward to do in public. Instead, several of them taught themselves to use a type caption feature within the SonicPics app.

Prior researchers like Merewether and Fleet (2013) suggested that data collection take place within children's natural settings. Other researchers have suggested that adults have children collect data using means with which they were familiar. One example may be found in Kirova and Emme's (2008) study. Their strategy was to introduce fotonovela into a school photography club, prior to conducting their study. Later, some of these students became co-researchers, collecting data in this format that was already familiar to them (Kirova & Emme, 2008).

Students in the current study were in an unnatural setting – a school excursion away from home and their familiar environments. Yet they modified the data collection instrument into something that was more natural to them, something more like posting on social media (see Blair et al., 2015; Pew Research Center, 2013).

5.3.2 Young Co-Researchers Conceptualized Phases of the Research Process in Which They Were Not Involved

As noted in Chapter 4, young researchers in this study were mostly involved in the data collection phase of the study. Yet, their comments show examples of conceptualizing every

phase of the research process. This is interesting for two reasons: 1) some doubt children's ability to collaborate in interpretation, and 2) children are often overlooked in the dissemination phase (see Alderson, 2008; Christensen & Prout, 2002; Coppock, 2011; Hart, 1992; Mayall, 1994). While co-research has many supporters, there are few studies that actually involve children in every phase of the research process (see Kellett et al., 2004). While the current study mostly included children in data collection, it is the intention of the larger background study to include young co-researchers in other phases of research. The young researchers' spontaneous interpretations, along with their ideas about what might happen with the findings from their research, encourage and remind adults to include them in future efforts.

5.3.3 Young Voices Shared Stories of Deciding to Consent to Study

Prior child-focused studies have illustrated ways in which adult researchers have tried to explain or obtain consent (see Chen et al., 2010; Coppock, 2011; Ergler, 2011; Kellett, 2010; Kellett et al., 2004; Kirova & Emme, 2008; Mayes & Groundwater-Smith, 2010; Morrow, 2005; Pinter & Zandian, 2015; Smith et al., 2002). This study adds to the literature by sharing children's unique perspectives.

As shown in Chapter 4, children shared their stories of deciding to consent to this study. Their stories varied. Some students felt inspired. Others wanted to help or to better remember their experiences. Others had more ambiguous reasons, not really understanding or perhaps not wanting to share why they chose to participate in this study.

Among those voices there are comments that make adult researchers uncomfortable. They illustrate that in spite of our efforts, some children might not have understood consent, or some might have consented less than willingly. As much as we do not want to hear these voices,

Porter and Abane (2008) argue that it is important that we listen. These voices allow us to better understand children's thought processes; and perhaps in the future, to improve the ways that we explain and obtain consent.

5.4 YOUNG CO-RESEARCHERS DESCRIBED THE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

What makes this study different from prior studies is that it explores children's perceptions of conducting research, including their expectations of the experience and their comments about it afterward. Prior studies have not explored children's thoughts and feelings about serving as co-researchers. Prioritizing children's voices in this study allowed us to hear from them what their research experience was like. Notable findings include: 1) young co-researchers found the research experience to be empowering, as predicted by theoretical literature; 2) young co-researchers discovered that they valued being heard; and 3) young co-researchers shared their thoughts about the work of research.

5.4.1 Young Co-Researchers Found Empowerment in Conducting Research

Prior theoretical literature predicted that co-research practices empower children as social actors, who experience autonomy and contribute meaning to a study (Alderson, 2004; Christensen & Prout, 2002; Darbyshire et al., 2005; Docherty & Sandelowski, 1999; Ergler, 2011; Hart, 1992; Kellett, 2005; Mayall, 2008; Merewether & Fleet, 2013; Pinter, 2014; Robinson & Kellett, 2004; Scott, 2008). The problem with this prediction is that these benefits remain theoretical, since few

published studies have made use of children as co-researchers (Kim, 2016; Lundy et al., 2011; Smith, 2002).

Young researchers in this study expected empowerment. They expected to learn more, to think more, and to help. Later, they expressed that they felt that they did help. And, they expressed that they enjoyed the autonomy that allowed them to explore more than they otherwise would have. These comments illustrate that children's co-research experiences may have lived up to both adult and child expectations.

5.4.2 Young Co-Researchers Discovered that they Valued Having their Voices Heard

Findings in Chapter 4 illustrated that while only one young researcher mentioned at the beginning of the trip that he looked forward to being heard, after the trip was over several children mentioned this as the part of the research experience that they would like to share with other people. This hints at the idea that perhaps these children realized the value in having their voices heard. This finding is interesting because the young co-researchers in this study may not have realized or expected that they would want or need to be heard. Yet, once they experienced it, they commented that it was the one aspect of the study that they would share with other people. In Chapter 3, I described the difficulties involved in conducting research conversations on the boys' bus. Yet, the boys' post-excursion comments indicate that they did appreciate having an adult listen to them and thoughtfully consider what they had to share.

Perhaps prioritizing the young researchers' voices helped them to feel empowered, as suggested by several prior researchers (Alderson, 2001; Grover, 2004; Hunleth, 2011; Schäfer & Yarwood, 2008). Grover (2004) suggested that power is closely tied to voice. Adults strip child research participants of their power when they fail to ask children for input regarding research

questions, ethical implications, or data interpretations; neglect to ask children for their personal reflections on topics or experiences as research participants; or decline to ask children for input on what the implications of their work should look like (Grover, 2004, p. 82). Young co-researchers in this study may have realized that being listened to was an experience worth telling others about.

5.4.3 Young Co-Researchers Recognized Research as Work

Perhaps most surprising was the candid way in which the young researchers expressed their feelings about the labor involved in conducting research. Prior studies have not explored children's perceptions of the co-research experience, which is probably why this revelation – that children view co-research as work – has yet to be uncovered. Some young researchers expressed that they would have preferred not to have collected data, while others thought that the experience made their excursion better. Some explicitly stated that they would not want to be professional researchers, while others commented that they would love to do it again. This revelation led me to some necessary reflection. As I expected, I experienced the enjoyment, as well as stress and exhaustion, that came from working during this field study. Yet, I (perhaps unrealistically) had wanted these young researchers to have an experience that only felt fun.

Pinter and Zandian's (2015) article about a follow up meeting with young children involved in a participatory action research study illustrates one of the few examples of adults giving children room to express their opinions about the research experience. Like Pinter and Zandian (2015), this revelation – that several of the children felt that they were working – highlighted "limitations of [the] endeavor" (p. 247). I had wanted the young researchers to only

experience enjoyment. Yet this new knowledge is an opportunity to better understand young researchers' experiences.

5.5 SUMMARY AND ADDITIONAL REFLECTIONS

This study uncovered some particularly notable findings. To start with, the ways in which young co-researchers modified the data collection tool and conceptualized all aspects of the research process give credence to prior theory that young people are capable of and interested in conducting research. In addition, young researchers echoed prior theory when they expressed that they felt empowered by the co-research methods.

At the same time, this study prioritized voices of young researchers, which led to some unexpected findings. For example, in spite of their comfort with certain aspects of the research process, the young researchers in this study shared stories of consent that illustrated that not all of them were fully aware of why they chose to participate. In addition, findings suggest that the research experience may have led some students to value being heard. This echoes prior research that places emphasis on the importance of child's voice in co-research. Finally, prioritizing children's voices led us to the knowledge that some of these young researchers recognized that research is work, and it is a career that some would not wish to pursue. These findings lead to the consideration of implications for future research, as discussed in the following chapter.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses implications of this study, as well as its limitations and considerations for further research. The following section explores methodological implications, implications for learning, and implications for painful heritage research.

6.2 METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The following subsections explore the methodological implications of this study for future co-researched studies with children. Under consideration are the implications of research methods employed in this study and the implications of the work of co-research.

6.2.1 Implications of Co-Research Methods Used in this Study

Methodological implications include children's potential to: a) collaborate in mobile ethnography, b) participate in research conversations, c) think about implications, and d) engage with multiple oral and written forms of data collection within a single study.

6.2.1.1 Mobile ethnography

This study is part of a larger study which employs the methods of *mobile ethnography* (see Marcus, 1995; Muskat, Muskat, Zehrer, & Johns, 2013; Seaton, 2002). Specifically, ours was an immersed ethnography in which we traveled with schoolchildren from place to place, during their four-day excursion. Mobile ethnography holds promise for exploration of children's school excursion experience.

In tourism literature, there are a few examples of adult tourism experiences being explored through this method. Seaton (2002) joined football fans on a bus. In a study most closely related to the larger study, Muskat et al. (2013) analyzed the experiences of university students at an Australian museum, using an application that the students downloaded on their smartphones.

The current study illustrates that children are able to participate in mobile ethnography. Future research might combine strategies from this study and those from Muskat et al. (2013). Children might use their own devices or social media to record their experiences at a destination.

6.2.1.2 Research conversations

In the current study, research conversations were a fruitful data source. Young researchers revealed their hopes and their frustrations with the research experience. The flexible format of research conversations worked well within the logistical limitations of a mobile ethnography. In addition, flexibility of research conversations allowed the students to interview each other, eliciting responses that were perhaps more genuine than those they would have given to adults. The research conversations also allowed us to prioritize children's voices, letting them interview with friends or alone, to be asked questions by an adult or ask questions of each other, and to be prompted by pre-planned prompts or to talk about whatever they wanted. In these situations, it

emerged that children's thoughts ranged far beyond their assigned data collection tasks. Also, research conversations allowed children to express their thoughts immediately after visiting an evocative site, the Flight 93 National Memorial.

Future researchers might employ research conversations in other mobile ethnography settings. Research conversations might also be useful for exploring children's experiences at other evocative destinations, or to explore how children interact with each other when given the power of interviewer.

6.2.1.3 Analysis and interpretation

Young co-researchers in this study showed evidence of beginning to analyze the data that they collected and coming up with interpretations. Children were able to think about others' experiences, and how their connections to an event might influence their visitor experiences.

Future studies might involve children more heavily in this interpretation phase. Forefronting children's voices in interpretation has the potential to minimize adult voice and provide genuine insight from children themselves.

6.2.1.4 Multiple methods

In this study, some young researchers expressed a preference for talking, while others expressed a preference for writing. It is worth noting that some students who may not have preferred to speak later commented that they valued having someone listen to them.

Future researchers might do well to allow child participants to participate in multiple ways. Providing different options for children to participate means that children who dislike one method may still express their thoughts and feelings in another way. Additionally, using smart

devices, along with interviews and written comments, could lead to a more complete picture of child experience.

6.2.2 Implications of Children's Recognition of the Work of Research

One of the most surprising findings was what children had to say about the labor of field research, what I called the *work of research*. This finding provides an opportunity for further research into the labor of co-research, and ways in which children's power and consent might play a role in allowing them to manage their own research experiences. Talk of work and labor inevitably leads the conversation to compensation. What is fair compensation for young co-researchers?

It is not the purpose of this study to explore or espouse means by which to compensate child co-researchers. Such compensation is subject to ethical and legal standards imposed by institutions and governing authorities. Moreover, for an *adult* researcher to decide that a child has been fairly compensated hints at paternalism. Instead, adults might employ co-research strategies that empower *child* researchers to decide whether compensation is proportionate to the work involved. To have this power, child co-researchers should understand that if the experience does not meet their expectations, they may stop participating. To clarify, the two pieces that may empower children to determine whether they are adequately compensated include: a) an understanding of what to expect from the research experience, and b) an understanding that if what they gain from the experience does not seem of equal value to the effort that they extend, that they may opt out at any time without repercussions.

To empower children to decide whether they are being fairly compensated, adults might convey: a) realistic descriptions of children's research roles; b) realistic descriptions of the

research experience; and c) that children can stop participating at any time, without penalties. While there has been much conversation about children's consent in prior literature, researchers have yet to discuss how closely consent and compensation are related. I contend that consent is an important ingredient of compensation. If children truly understand that they may opt out of any activity at any time without punitive measures, then perhaps they can decide if what they receive from the experience is worth the effort that they extend. As mentioned above, along with consent, the other part of compensation is a realistic understanding of what to expect from the co-research experience.

Some in our study were surprised by the amount of work involved in co-research. Could we have better explained this ahead of time? Yes, and we will apply what we have learned in future studies. Yet like other field researchers, it was impossible for us to know all of what might happen until we were actually in the field (Hubbard et al., 2001; Punch, 2012). We were unaware how often it would rain, for example, or that a bus's engine would overheat, or that we would be caught in traffic and late for a scheduled stop. At the same time, some students may have been unaware of which circumstances were normal parts of a school excursion (e.g., long days and extensive walking) and which were parts of the co-research experience (e.g., cumbersome iPads). Students who opted out of various research activities still experienced all of the glitches (and the "fun") that came along with a multi-day school excursion. In order to address the problem of compensating young co-researchers, adults might empower children with realistic expectations and freedom to opt out, enabling them to make their own decisions about whether the compensation that they receive is fair. The following section explores implications for learning.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNING

This study did not focus on children's learning experiences. There are many studies in tourism and education journals that address this issue (see for example Alon & Tal, 2015; Brugar, 2012; DeWitt & Storksdieck, 2008; Shargel, 2014). Yet, young co-researchers' comments reveal that they expected conducting research to lead to a school excursion which was more interesting, and during which they would learn more. After the trip, some students revealed that they felt that conducting research enriched their excursion experience.

Future researchers might design comparison studies to measure learning of student visitors as compared to those who co-research during a school excursion. The following section explores implications of this study for research with children in a painful heritage context.

6.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PAINFUL HERITAGE CONTEXT

At the time of the research conversations analyzed for this study, children had only visited one destination: the Flight 93 National Memorial. This is a painful heritage site, where a terror attack caused a jetliner to crash on September 11, 2001. The other set of data analyzed for this study, the final comment, was collected two weeks after the children returned home. Between the research conversation and the final comment, young co-researchers visited many painful heritage sites, including Arlington National Cemetery and the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial, among others.

The ways in which context influences a child's visit to such a site are included in a conceptual model which will be introduced in a future paper. Savage (2009) pondered whether a

site's context might cause vicarious trauma in children. Similar theories have emerged from studies in psychiatry and related fields, which indicate that children may become distressed even when only indirectly exposed to human suffering (Burnham, 2005; Pfefferbaum et al., 2000; see also Kerr & Price, 2016, 2018).

How then might co-research methods empower children to regain some control of their visits in the face of deeply affecting context? As mentioned previously, prior work suggested that children's tourism experiences are affected by factors that differ from those of adult visitors, including: a) incomplete understanding of death; b) lack of agency in travel and destination choice; c) youthful exploratory behavior; and d) emotional vulnerability (Kerr & Price, 2018). These factors need further study. But how might tourism researchers begin to study them? Co-research methods, including those presented in the conceptual model, may allow tourism researchers to navigate the waters of context at sites of painful heritage.

First, co-research may allow children the freedom to mold research questions to meet their own needs, perhaps negating potential distress. Young researchers ask questions and explore topics that feel both comfortable and important to them. Young co-researchers were able to self-regulate their levels of involvement with potentially disturbing aspects of the site, without feeling that they had failed to complete a task. In this way, co-research strategies empowered young researchers to contribute to research while choosing how they might like to be involved, according to their own comfort levels with the site context.

Next, co-research encourages adults to hand over some research tasks to children, thereby encouraging young co-researchers' positive engagement with the site and interpretation. Tourism researchers have continued to call for a greater use of interactive and participative experiences (Campos, Mendes, Oom do Valle, & Scott, 2018; see also Buhalis, 2001; Mathisen, 2013;

Morgan, Elbe, & Curiel, 2009; Scott, Laws, & Boksberger, 2009). Active engagement allows tourists to “do things, rather than just *look at* them” (Campos et al., 2018, p. 369; see also Azevedo, 2009; Eraqi, 2011). This active engagement may include physical activity.

When children visit tourist sites, they desire to be physically active (Khoo-Lattimore, 2015; Price & Kerr, 2017a; Rhoden et al., 2016; Small, 2008). Both Roche and Quinn (2016) and Small (2008) noted that children’s physical activity during a visit is a strong factor in shaping their memories. Positive physical experiences may lead to happy memories; the opposite may also be true (Small, 2008). Promoting children’s physical activity by involving them in research may empower them to engage with the site comfortably and on their own terms, and to create happy memories about their experiences there.

Finally, providing children with the option to opt out of research activities allows them to further control their own experiences with the context of a site of painful heritage. The ability to opt out of activities and experiences is closely tied to consent. While children may consent to participate or co-research in a study, they may not know in advance what kind of feelings an evocative site might create for them. Simply, recognizing that children may consent “also requires acknowledging their right to dissent and hence to opt out of the research” (Dockett & Perry, 2011, p. 233). Tourism researchers may manage emotional aspects of context by empowering children to opt out of any activity at any time. While some students opted *in* to evocative exhibits, co-research strategies provided opportunities for them to share their feelings with their adult counterparts. In the immediately following research conversations, they shared their feelings with listening adults who valued what they had to share. The following section explores limitations of this study.

6.5 LIMITATIONS

The main limitation of this study is that it is exploratory, and it is a single case study. This is one of the first published studies of children's expectations of and revelations about the research process and their co-research experiences. As an exploratory study, this study's limitations may be viewed as potential directions for future research.

To start with, like prior qualitative researchers, I included comments that illuminated insights which may otherwise have been overlooked, even when only a few students expressed them (Miles et al., 2014, pp. 301-302; see also Erickson, 1996; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For example, Logan and Michael's conversation about what might happen with the findings from their research illustrated that some young researchers conceptualize dissemination, even when they are not involved with that phase of the study. In future studies, researchers might use these insights as starting points, designing studies that explore certain aspects of research process in more depth than was feasible in this study.

Next, the two data sets analyzed for this study must be carefully considered. The first data set, research conversations, were semi-structured events during which young co-researchers talked as long as time allowed and they wished to continue. The second data set consisted of written comments, for which young co-researchers had one half-sheet of paper and the back, if necessary, to answer. In addition, the prompt for the comment asked students what they would like to share with others about their experience. Students were able to discuss a variety of topics in more depth in the research conversations than was feasible in the written comment. One must consider that if a topic was not mentioned in the written comment, that may be because the student prioritized what could be mentioned in the limited space, or simply responded to the

prompt. Future studies might use multiple data collection methods to fully explore children's thoughts and feelings before and after their co-research experiences.

A final limitation of this study is that it included one group of children. All students were from the same school and were relatively the same age (13-15). These young teens presumably were diverse in abilities, as they encompassed the entire eighth grade class from one district. Yet, they were homogeneous in many ways. Along with age range, all were white and English-speaking, all were from the same school in a rural area where the population was predominantly of low socio-economic status (United States Census Bureau, 2010). Further studies should include children from different backgrounds, who vary by ethnicity, economic and social factors, and school environment. In addition, co-research strategies should be applied in studies of younger children and older adolescents.

6.6 ADDITIONAL DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The above limitations provide starting points for further study. In addition, the innovative nature of this study also provides directions for further research. For any adult researcher, co-research with children offers promise and opportunity. As adults gain unique insights into children's experiences, these strategies empower children to act and share their thoughts and feelings with listening adults. As demonstrated in this study and others, children value having their voices heard. By strategically listening to children's voices and incorporating their views into research studies, adults can improve both the value and the experience of research.

This is one of the first published studies about young researchers' expectations and revelations of conducting research and being researchers. Additionally, it is one of the first to

explore young researchers' ideas about the research process. Furthermore, it is the first study to explore youth as co-researchers in a tourism context. As such, the following questions may supply starting points for future research.

First, this study opens the door to methodological exploration. How might children use their own smart devices in research at museums and memorials? What other ways might the co-research strategies in the conceptual model be applied in tourism research with children? Might the strategies in the model also apply co-research with other overlooked groups, such as tourists with disabilities or those visiting from other nations?

Second, why did young co-researchers seem to intuitively grasp the research process? Future studies might explore whether an inclination toward research is intuitive or learned through common classroom practices (see Alderson, 2001).

Third, how should adults compensate young co-researchers? Future research might explore the boundaries between children working *with* adult researchers and children working *for* adult researchers.

In pursuit of answers to these questions, both adults and children would be well-served to collaborate. Put simply, research *with* children has the potential to dramatically improve research *about* children. In return, research with children has the potential to dramatically improve the research experience *for* children.

APPENDIX A

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Who and what is the University of Pittsburgh Flight 93 Research Team?

On the morning of September 11, 2001, terrorists took over United Flight 93 and turned it towards Washington, D.C. The passengers and crew fought back, and the terrorists did not succeed. All on board were killed when the plane crashed into a field in rural Shanksville, PA.

We work with the National Park Service to develop programs for children and teens who visit the crash site and memorial. We are professors, undergraduate and graduate students, educators, librarians, and researchers. All of us are volunteers whose mission is to help youth get the most out of their visit to the Memorial.

How did you get involved with our school?

One of the ways we support the National Park Service is by studying their vast collection of tributes. Tributes include things that visitors leave at the site or letters and art they send to the site. One day we discovered the note cards that [Midwest Town] students had left. We wondered about your school's annual visits and so we contacted your superintendent to learn more. Since then, we have had many conversations with Ms. [withheld] and Mr. [withheld]. Together, we thought it would help the National Park Service to learn how teachers and children

study Flight 93 and what they learn while they are at the Memorial. We also plan to go to Washington, DC, so we can see how students learn about the Holocaust Museum and the Pentagon Memorial. This handout will explain our research to you.

How could it help to learn about just one school?

Surprisingly, there is almost no research on school field trips, especially to sites like Flight 93 Memorial and the Holocaust Museum. This means that teachers don't always know the best ways to prepare their students for such trips to memorials and other sites like this. There is some research, but it is all about adults.

So, what does this all mean for our students?

We work with young people, so we know that they learn differently from adults. That is why we really wanted to hear not only from the teachers but also from your students. We consider your students as important partners in our research. We want to learn as much as we can because we are helping some sites plan for children's visits.

Before the trip, we will come to classes so your students can meet us and learn about some of the places they will visit. We will observe and record notes. When your students are touring, we will listen and record the kinds of things they ask and what interests them. At some of the sites, we will give out iPads so students can take pictures and record their ideas. Next, students will write some short notes on the bus after their visits, which we will collect and study. After visiting some of the sites, the teachers will have conversations with the students about their visit. We will participate in their conversations to learn more and will record notes.

What else do I need to know?

We want you to know that. . .

- ✓ Our research has been approved by your district’s teachers, superintendent, and by the University of Pittsburgh through its research approval unit, the Protection of Human Subjects Board.
- ✓ Last year, 48 students participated successfully in a similar study.
- ✓ All of the team members who observe at school or at the sites must have child abuse clearances, even though we will not be chaperoning your students.
- ✓ Students’ names will not appear in any notes, reports, presentations, or publications.
- ✓ Students will not be penalized if they choose not to be in our research; participation is voluntary. For example, students may opt out of sharing their comments with us and may choose not to share any photographs or join a conversation. Participating or not will not affect their relationship/standing with the school or their grades.
- ✓ If you do not wish to be included in our study, just let Dr. Kerr, Mr. [withheld] or Ms. [withheld] know this, and we will not include your child’s comments or observations in our reports.
- ✓ There is no additional cost for the trip because of this study.
- ✓ Students who participate in the study can receive official documentation of their participation. We will prepare certificates so the teachers can add each student’s name.

This project sounds pretty interesting. Is there a way for parents and guardians to get involved, too?

We welcome your suggestions! Please help us plan a great project. We also would invite you to read our reports and tell us what you think *parents* would like to know. We will hold a meeting with parents to share what we’ve learned once we finish our work next summer.

If I have a suggestion or question later, whom do I contact? Just talk with Ms. [withheld] or Mr. [withheld] at the school, or contact Dr. Mary Margaret Kerr, Pitt team director, at mmkerr@pitt.edu or 412-648-7205.

APPENDIX B

STUDY ASSENT LETTER

Hello! This handout will explain our research to you. We call this an informed consent form because you should have all the information you need to consent or agree to join a research study.

What is the research about?

There is almost no research on school field trips, especially to sites like Flight 93 Memorial and the Holocaust Museum. This means that teachers don't always know the best ways to plan trips to memorials and other sites like this. There is some research, but it is all about adults.

So, what does this mean for me?

We work with young people, so we know that you learn differently from adults. That is why we really want to hear not only from the teachers but also from you. We see you students as important partners in our research. We want to learn as much as we can because we help places plan for students' visits.

Before the trip, we will come to your school so you can meet us and learn about some of the places you will visit. When we go with you to visit places, we will take notes about what you

like and don't like. At some of the sites, we will give out iPads so you can take pictures and record your ideas. You can also write some short notes on the bus after the visits, which we will collect and study. After going to some places, the teachers will talk with you about the visit. We will join in the meetings to learn more and take notes.

What else do I need to know?

We want you to know that. . .

- ✓ Our research has been approved by your teachers, superintendent, and by the University of Pittsburgh, where we work and study.
- ✓ Last year, 48 students took part in our study. They did not report any problems. We do not think there are any risks of problems for you.
- ✓ All of the team members have child abuse clearances, even though we will not be chaperones.
- ✓ Your names will not appear in any notes, reports, presentations, or publications.
- ✓ The trip does not cost more because of the study.
- ✓ Students who are in the study receive a certificate showing you helped us with the research.
- ✓ You can do some activities and skip other ones.
- ✓ If you do not want to be part of our study, that is okay. You can stop being in it any time. Just let Dr. Kerr, Mr. [withheld] or Ms. [withheld] know this, and we will not include your comments, photos or observations in our reports. Your grades and other school activities will not change if you are not in our research.
- ✓ If you ever have a problem about the study, you can call the University of Pittsburgh Human Subjects Protection Advocate toll-free at 866-212-2668.

We welcome your ideas! Please help us plan a great project.

We also invite you to read our reports and tell us what you think. We will hold a meeting with you after the study to share what we learned.

If I have a suggestion or question later, whom do I contact?

Just talk with Ms. [withheld] or Mr. [withheld] at the school, or contact Dr. Mary Margaret Kerr, Pitt team director, at mmkerr@pitt.edu or 412-648-7205.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE DAILY ITINERARY

Day 4

Wednesday, May 4, 2016

- 7:30 AM Breakfast is included
- 8:30 AM Motorcoaches depart for touring
 - The Pentagon 9/11 Memorial
 - Marine Corps Memorial Iwo Jima Statue
 - Arlington National Cemetery walking tour
- 12:15 PM Wreath Ceremony at Tomb of Unknowns / group confirmed
- 1:00 PM DC Metro: Arlington Cemetery to Metro Center
- 2:00 PM Lunch is included / Hard Rock® Café
- 3:30 PM Ford's Ranger Talk in Theatre Only, Petersen House, and Center for Education and Leadership / # 60
(no Museum entry available)
- 4:30 PM Meet the motorcoaches / transfer to the memorials
 - Lincoln Memorial, Korean & Vietnam Veterans Memorials
- 7:00 PM Begin boarding the boat for dinner
- 7:30 PM Potomac Spirit® Dinner Dance Cruise
- 10:00 PM Disembark & load motorcoaches / depart for the hotel

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