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Place, Story, Ritual: An Introduction to The Experience of President Lincoln's Cottage Study and Report

Since 2014, President Lincoln's Cottage has been engaged with Dr. Julio Bermudez, Professor of Architecture and Director of the Cultural Studies and Sacred Space graduate program at Catholic University and executive advisor to the Johns Hopkins University International Arts + Mind Lab at the JHU Brain Science Institute, to study the depth of impact of the experience at President Lincoln's Cottage. In August 2016, after months of planning, we embarked on a groundbreaking neuroscientific study of how the physical place, the stories shared, and the ritual of the guided experience affect visitors both emotionally and intellectually. Over eighteen months, we engaged in a visitor impact survey of nearly 1,000 individuals. Results indicate that both the structure itself and nature of the tour are critical in creating what survey respondents describe as “an emotional experience” that shapes visitors’ understanding of their visit – that is to say, the ritual performance of the guided tour experience is the fulcrum.

This survey is just the beginning. These results, in combination with our plans to take this study further, have wide-ranging implications far beyond the museum field, informing practice across disciplines at organizations that rely on the interaction of physical space and ritual performance – such as churches, schools, and other place-based entities. A full report of those findings follows this summary.

About President Lincoln's Cottage: President Lincoln's Cottage is an independent nonprofit historic site and museum located in Washington, DC. It is a National Monument, National Historic Landmark, and site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, but receives no federal operating support. Our dedication to keeping the Cottage a “home for brave ideas” is evidenced in our interpretive approach, which has earned considerable national recognition for innovation and excellence from such organizations as the American Alliance of Museums and the American Association of State and Local History. The Cottage also received the Presidential Award for Extraordinary Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons in 2016 for our Students Opposing Slavery program.

Background: Scholars have long noted Lincoln's remarkable accomplishments as President as well as the growth and evolution of his ideas. Scholarship suggests that Lincoln was transformed by his time living at the Cottage, and that the place played a significant role in his thinking. Rather than attempting to prove Lincoln's state of mind in the past, we intended to test whether the immersive Cottage tour successfully creates a transformative experience for visitors today.

Using renowned religious study scholar Dr. Lindsay Jones's framework on modes of presentation in sacred spaces, the visitor relationship to the Cottage is understood as a secular place of pilgrimage and ritual for visitors of all purposes and contexts. Dr. Jones's framework describes three different relationships between human participants in ritual and the spaces where the ritual occurs:

- orientation (in the case of the Cottage, the building itself);
- commemoration (the stories of Lincoln's life at the Cottage); and
- ritual context (the guided tour of the Cottage).

According to Bermudez's findings, President Lincoln's Cottage is successful in delivering at all three levels. These findings are further illustrated by individual feedback from survey respondents, who commented on a wide range of aspects of the experience in open-ended responses:

-“I didn't expect the dialogue, but it enhanced the tour to have group conversation. These are unusual times in our country. People need to talk!”

-“The tour was informative, thought-provoking, emotional, and caused me to think more about what I am contributing to the common good.”

-“[The Cottage's guided tour] made me think more than any other site about not only the history but the values we as individuals should strive for.”

-“It made me think more about...the overall state of our country right now and my need to find a way to contribute to change rather than continue my feelings of helplessness.”

Next Steps: As the first phase is now complete, we seek to use mobile EEG technology to evaluate visitors' neurological responses to the Cottage tour in a scientifically-validated manner, using two control groups to understand the impact of each variable on visitors' states of mind. This project will result in a tool that can be used to evaluate methodology and space together using data gathered at President Lincoln's Cottage but applicable at organizations of diverse discipline and mission. Armed with scientifically-gathered data indicating the components of the visitor experience (place and nature of experience) that have the strongest impact on individuals' emotional and intellectual responses to their visit, organizations will be able to better tailor their unique methods in the context of place, space, and community to serve their missions (and be better able to measure their success.)

Implications: Findings from these data will enable organizations of all kinds to improve the skills and sustain the excellence of the staff directly engaging with the public. Leveraging and sharing data gathered as part of the proposed second phase of this project will enable President Lincoln's Cottage and other organizations across disciplines and purposes to improve the use of

space, story, and interaction in leading ritual experiences. This will allow organizations to develop new metrics and evolve their activities – setting the stage for smart growth of the programs that work. This highly interdisciplinary study has significance not only for museums, but for secular and religious organizations of all sizes and budgets. It will also mark the first time mobile EEG technology will be used in the United States to measure evidence-based neuroscientific responses to place, story, and ritual – a groundbreaking approach.

Acknowledgements: This 18-month project would not have been possible without the support, engagement, and effort of many individuals and organizations. We thank the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Innovation Fund for providing seed funding for this project. We thank Dr. Julio Bermudez — who immediately saw the possibilities here — and Brandon Ro for their careful design of this tool and astute analysis of the results. We thank our team for the countless hours spent administering the survey and for dutifully inputting the data. And, we thank the 927 Cottage visitors who graciously provided their time and feedback to this project.

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Results of a Museum focused Post-Occupancy Evaluation Survey



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INTRODUCTION

Powerful experiences in architecture have the ability to transform, affect, or change human understanding. These changes can occur on metaphysical, sociopolitical, psychological, religious, or pedagogical levels.¹ Significantly historic places and museums that celebrate culture, events, people, art, and artifacts tend to have such remarkable capacity and therefore, not surprisingly, attract people from all walks of life to their doors. One such place that commemorates an important part of American history, offers visitors a barrier-free spatial experience, and utilizes a unique curatorial strategy is President Lincoln's Cottage at the Soldiers' Home (hereafter PLC) in Washington, D.C.



One means of assessing the quality of the built environment is through post-occupancy evaluations. In general, post-occupancy evaluations are used to assess “building performance from the building users’ point of view.”² From a building owner’s perspective, however, post-occupancy evaluations “address how well a facility contributes to the productivity, satisfaction, and well-being of the occupants and the goals of the organization.”³ For this particular study, it was determined to conduct a museum-focused post-occupancy evaluation to learn how the experience of PLC affects visitors. A survey instrument was designed to capture the *unique experience* of this historic place with an understanding that the information

¹ For an introduction to this argument, see Lindsay Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture: Experience, Interpretation, Comparison*, 2 vols, Religions of the World (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 1:94-99, 103.

² Wolfgang F.E. Preiser and Jack L. Nasar, “Assessing Building Performance: Its Evolution from Post-Occupancy Evaluation.” *Archnet-IJAR*, v.2, no.1 (March 2008), p.85.

³ Larry Lord and Margaret Serrato, “Postoccupancy Evaluation.” In *The Architect’s Handbook of Professional Practice*, 13th ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2001), 688.

collected would be used to improve the mission and work of the organization. Of particular importance was determining how and in what ways visitors' understanding of the history, place, and person were changed as a result of their visit.



METHODOLOGY

Survey Design

The museum-focused post-occupancy evaluation survey for PLC age was designed based on research and findings from different types of building surveys.⁴ There were a total of 32 questions in the full survey ranging in question type from multiple-choice, ranking scale, and open-ended. The questions were organized into four main sections to

⁴ See Julio Bermudez and Brandon Ro, "Memory, Social Interaction, and Communicability in Extraordinary Experiences of Architecture," In *The Visibility of Research: Proceedings of the 2013 ARCC Spring Research Conference, Architectural Research Centers Consortium*, edited by Chris Jarrett, Kyoung-Hee Kim and Nick Senske (Charlotte, NC: University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 2013), pp.677-84; Julio Bermudez and Brandon Ro, "The Effect of Gender, Age, and Education in Extraordinary Aesthetic Experiences," In *Healthy + Healing Places: Proceedings of the 44th Annual Conference of the Environmental Design Research Association*, edited by Jeremy Wells and Eleferios Pavlides (Providence, RI: Environmental Design Research Association, 2013), pp.279-80; Brandon Ro and Julio Bermudez, "Understanding Extraordinary Architectural Experiences through Content Analysis of Written Narratives." *Enquiry: A Journal of Architectural Research* 12, no. 1 (2015): 17-34; Jeffery A. Lackney, "Assessing the Impact of the Physical Environment on the Educational Process: Integrating Theoretical Issues with Practical Concerns." Paper presented at the UEF21 New Jersey Institute of Technology Conference (Newark, NJ, September 17, 1999); "Occupant Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) Survey," *Center for the Built Environment: Research*. The Regents of the University of California, n.d. web.

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learn more about: 1) the outcomes of the experience, 2) the context of the visit, 3) overall impressions, and 4) the respondent's background.

The first section of the survey focused on the patron's experience at PLC. Topics dealt with awareness of architectural and phenomenological qualities of the Cottage as well as the emotional and intellectual response and outcome of the experience by patrons. Social interaction and quality of knowledge gained were also covered. The second section of the survey turned its attention to more particular details about the patron's visit to PLC. Topics ranged from weather, time of day, and season of the year to the number of people in the group, tour guide, and duration of the visit. The third section of the survey followed up with three questions about the patron's overall impressions about their visit to PLC. The last section collected population data such as gender, age, education, occupation, and precedence of the visitors.

Demographics

The survey for PLC was conducted in paper format and later entered online using *Survey Monkey* from August 2016 to November 2017 and resulted in a total of 927 survey participants who were 18 years old and older. The nature of the sampling method utilized in this survey (i.e., people visiting the Cottage) resulted in a non-scientific (non-probability) group of respondents that can be characterized as both a convenience and voluntary sample. In other words, the survey was not designed to capture a scientific (probability) sample "that is truly representative of the larger population" and, therefore, cannot be used for making generalizations (inferential statistics) for people as a whole.⁵ Still, the respondents' demographics may be safely considered to be a cross-section of the typical visitor to the PLC and their responses consistent with such population. In this sense, the survey succeeds in assessing the PLC visitors' satisfaction of the museum environment and experience by capturing their perceptions, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes. The demographic composition can be summarized as follows. Survey participants were largely female (62.7%) and highly educated (88.5% had a college or graduate degree). The age of participants was fairly evenly distributed ranging from 18 to 70 or older with the largest group (46%) being between 50 to 69 years old.

⁵ Linda N. Groat and David Wang, *Architectural Research Methods* (New York: J. Wiley, 2002), 218-19.



DISCUSSION

As a framework to analyze the results of the survey, we used the work of Lindsay Jones on the phenomenology of sacred architecture.⁶ While we recognize that President Lincoln's Cottage is not a religious structure, we consider the unique historical events that took place there and their direct association with an important figure in American history highly significant. These factors alone tend to produce an understandable attraction and allurements as well as a veneration for the place and its historical occupant that creates conditions similar to those of sacred spaces.

PLC succeeds functionally and experientially because it works at all three levels of Jones' morphology of sacred architecture. This can be summarized as follows:

- (1) **Orientation** (*instigation, pointer*): the Cottage invites, allures, grounds, and frames the stories being told/remembered. This place is a point of pilgrimage for the thousands of visitors every year;
- (2) **Commemoration** (*content, message*): the actual history/events in Lincoln's life that occurred there in addition to the historic person himself; and

⁶ See Lindsay Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture: Experience, Interpretation, Comparison*, 2 vols, Religions of the World (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

- (3) **Ritual Context (presentation):** the one hour long interpretive guided tour in which guests participate.

The survey provides data clarifying the role that each of these aspects plays out during a patron's experience. Based on poll responses, participants consider (2) **commemoration** as the most important dimension of the experience closely followed by the (3) **ritual context** and lastly the allurements of the place or (1) **orientation**. This supports the interpretation that the Cottage works – especially by following Jones' typologies of ritual context – in the “**theater**” mode of presentation.

Commemoration

First and foremost, the highest level of both positive responses and consistency among participants concerns the **commemoration** or cognitive dimension of the experience at PLC (hereafter PLC). Survey respondents overwhelmingly ranked “*knowledge and insight about history and Lincoln*” as the highest outcome of their PLC experience (99%). Similarly, respondents considered “*knowing what happened*” at PLC (82.4%) and “*the stories they were told*” (80.2%) as the top two most impressive things about their visit. Not surprisingly, respondents were highly active by “*thinking about the place, history and person*” during the visit (98%). This response also shows the success of the guided tour in the “ritual context.”

The importance of ‘commemoration’ is not surprising, as this is perhaps a main reason for people to visit PLC. The fact that guests generally had little or no knowledge about PLC (63%) before their visit also explains these responses. What is surprising but also casts light on the importance of the cognitive/intellectual outcomes of the experience is that the educational background of the visitors was consistently very high with college degrees or above (88.5%).

Ritual Context

Second in importance comes the presentation in a **ritual context**; in other words, the quality, role, and outcome of the guided tour. There was a bit less (than with the content dimension of the experience) but still significant consistency in the responses (i.e., Standard Deviation).

People were very complimentary with the supportive role and successful facilitation of the tour guide to “*help them enter into the spirit / mood of PLC*” (96.9%). In fact, respondents considered “*the guide's friendliness and knowledge*” (75.4%) as the third most impressive thing about their visit. Overall, patrons were very engaged during the visit, since they were “*drawn to talk, share their impressions with others, or ask questions*” (85.9%).

Additionally, the success of the presentation in the ‘ritual context’ was supported by respondents explaining that the tour had the correct amount of “*talking and information to pay attention to or learn*” about (94%). Visitors felt that the format allowing them to “*freely move around, touch, and sit on the furniture added to their experience of PLC*” (92.8%). Respondents agreed that the presentation was “*long enough to appreciate the place*” (77.4%)

The ritualistic nature of the guided tour became further affirmed by the following responses:

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- On average, guided visits were composed of 9 or more people (66%), indicating the social nature of the performative event.
- People almost universally came to PLC with others (95.39%).
- Visitors were highly engaged, as mentioned above, by being “*drawn to talk, share their impressions with others, or ask questions*” (85.9%).

Orientation

Third in importance based on popularity in ranking and agreement in the responses is the **orientation** category due to the allurements of the place. Survey participants generally agreed that during their visit they *became “aware of the spatial, material and architectural qualities of PLC”* (84.1%). Similarly, respondents recognized becoming “*aware of the sounds, smells, light, textures, and other sensations of the place*” (83.2%). Over half of participants reported “*feeling the presence of President Lincoln*” at the cottage (58.40%). The “*Cottage’s interior space*” (54.11%) as well as “*the Cottage’s exterior and its landscape/grounds*” (51.9%) were the fourth and fifth most impressive things about their visit. While the allurements of the physical setting comes after PLC’s “*history*” (commemoration) and “*tour*” (ritual context) – in terms of recognition – the fact that the phenomenological character of the building and place actually instigate the whole experience reveals an interrelated relationship between all three. This helps to illustrate the fundamental and anchoring role that the artifact (i.e., architecture) play as a whole in the overall event.



CONCLUSION

These results indicate that while the experience of PLC would be impossible without the actual building, the place functions as the framework or stage from where (ORIENTATION) the history/stories (COMMEMORATION) are told through a performative and participatory tour (RITUAL CONTEXT). In Lindsay Jones' morphology, this type of functioning experience is termed 'THEATER' in the sense that the building becomes the backdrop and atmosphere supporting the delivery of the message through behavior-based rituals.

The survey results distinctly demonstrate the success of PLC in delivering at all three levels. Visitors consider their PLC experience very positively as:

- *Exciting/interesting* (96.4%)
- *Beautiful/Pleasing* (93.3%)
- *Calming/Relaxing* (85.5%)
- *Emotional/Intense* (72.5%)

While all these expressions suggest emotional arousal, these feelings are subdued possibly due to their relation to (1) a more reflective or cognitive response to the history/storytelling being shared and (2) the social dimension of the ritual (talking, sharing, interaction with others). Still, survey respondents unambiguously affirmed how much they got from the experience:

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- *Enjoyment/Satisfaction/Entertainment* (95.5%)
- *Appreciation of America, government, politics, leaders*(92.8%)
- *Awakened to sense of responsibility / Empathy / Love for humanity*(80.9%)

On the contrary, only a minute portion of respondents (2.5%) felt that their experience was *“Uneventful / Not worth the effort.”* Respondents were generally impressed with their experience at PLC, so much so that when asked if they *“would recommend the experience to others”* it was almost unanimously agreed that they would (96.9%). Another indicator of visitor satisfaction and the impact of the experience at PLC is the fact that 265 people (out of 927 total respondents, or 27%) signed up to receive the results of the survey.

It is likely that the tour conditions (ritual context) of allowing free movement and touching around the Cottage played an important role in generating this positive response toward the place, especially (we hypothesize) in *“feeling the presence of President Lincoln in this place.”* Although only a third of participants (36.6%) said that having *“no ropes/barriers limiting their actions and exploration”* impressed them, nearly all respondents agreed that being able to *“freely move around, touch, and sit on the furniture added to their experience of PLC”* (92.8%).

The effect of PLC on visitors, as indicated by the survey responses, strongly suggests that people's experiences were by and large both memorable and meaningful. While the experience appears to start intellectually (commemoration) and socially (ritual context), the experience ultimately turns out to be both sensual (place) and emotional as a combination of all three.

In order for this research to move forward, there remain four questions that given their nature need further analysis. The open-ended responses can only be discerned through content analysis. These include: **Question 7** (*“in a paragraph, tell us about your experience at PLC”*-- with 446 responses or about 10,000 words), **Question 18** (*“why did you come to visit PLC?”* -- with 873 responses or about 9,000 words), **Question 22** (*“is there anything you would improve?”* -- with 433 responses or about 5,000 words), and **Question 25** (*“what is your occupation?”*-- with 822 responses or about 1600 words). Without diminishing two of them, responses to questions 18 and 22 would be particularly relevant to illuminate the survey data.

Looking farther ahead in terms of research that meaningfully advances the understanding of the visitors' experience of the PLC (or any museum or place of significance for that matter), a deeper interrogation of the sensual and emotional dimensions of the experience vis-à-vis their correlation to intellectual and social responses is advisable. This should include the mapping of people's mental and physical responses in time and space as they go through the guided tour (i.e., in sync with it). Of course, this would be impossible to do using traditional, a-posteriori, self-reporting survey methods -- not to mention the normal problem of subjects' inability to be fully aware of their own mental, physical, and volitional operations (which invariably confound self-reporting methods). For this reason, a neurophenomenological approach that gathers data via cutting-edge mobile EEG (ElectroEncephaloGram) technology is recommended. This is an

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ambitious plan/idea but a doable one. In fact, such a research project would put the PLC in a leading role in its field as this type of interdisciplinary work (involving neuroscience, architecture, and museum sciences) has never been done yet, even though it is now possible. By using this, PLC can discover whole new vistas and insights for itself and related fields only dreamed of heretofore.



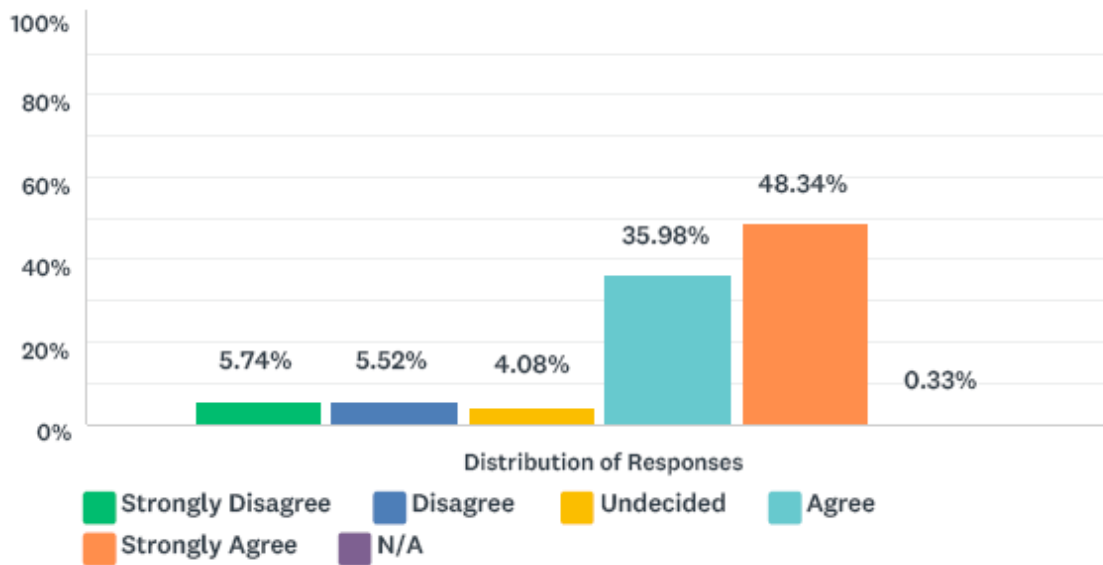
APPENDIX – SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the survey related directly to the curatorial strategy and patron experience of the museum spaces and are organized into four main sections: 1) patron experience, 2) about the visit, 3) overall impressions, and 4) demographics. Questions with open-ended responses are not included in this appendix and include questions 7, 18, 22, 25, 27, and 28.

1) Patron Experience

Q1: During my visit, I was aware of the spatial, material and architectural qualities of PLC.

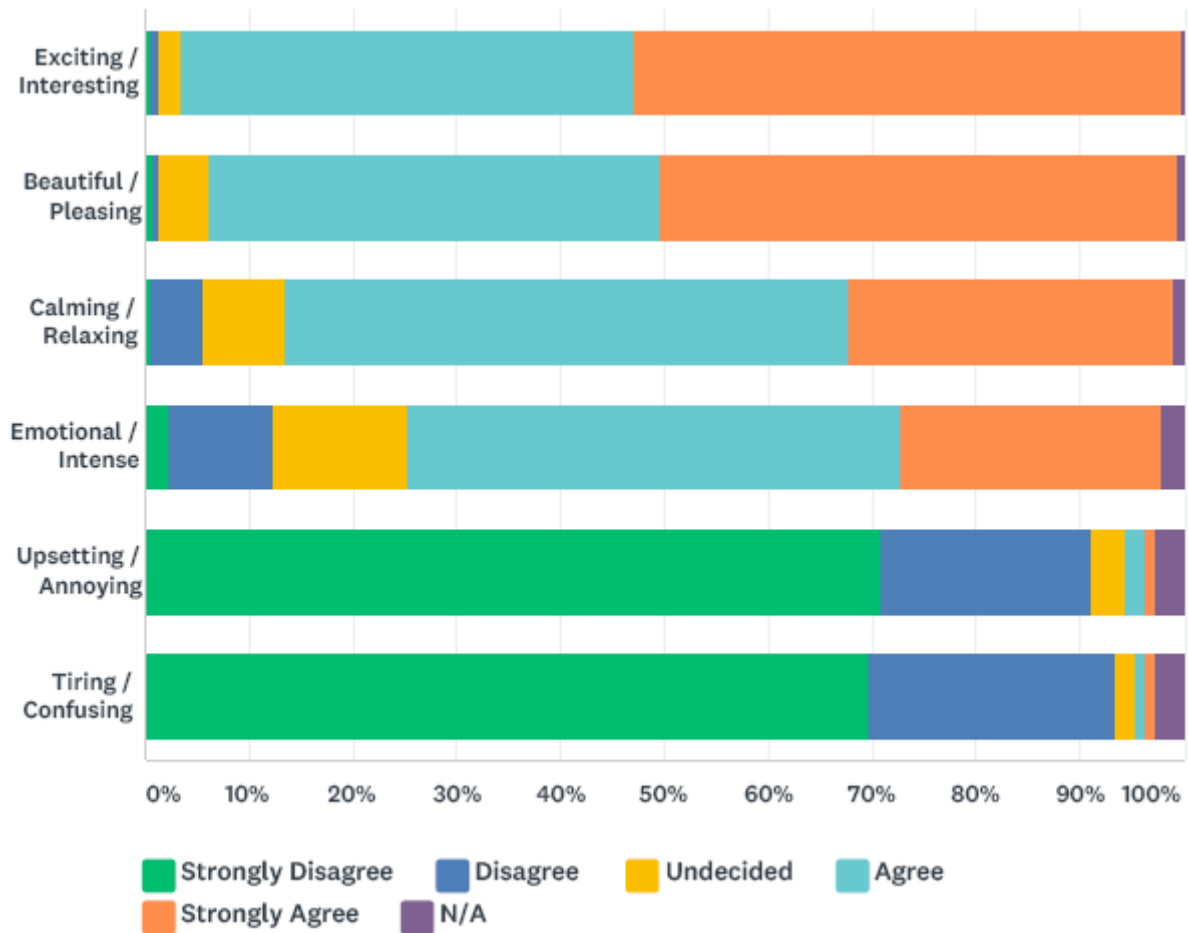
Findings: $N = 906$; $Mean = 4.2$; $SD = 1.11$; $84.3\% \geq agree$



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Q2: How would you characterize your experience at PLC?

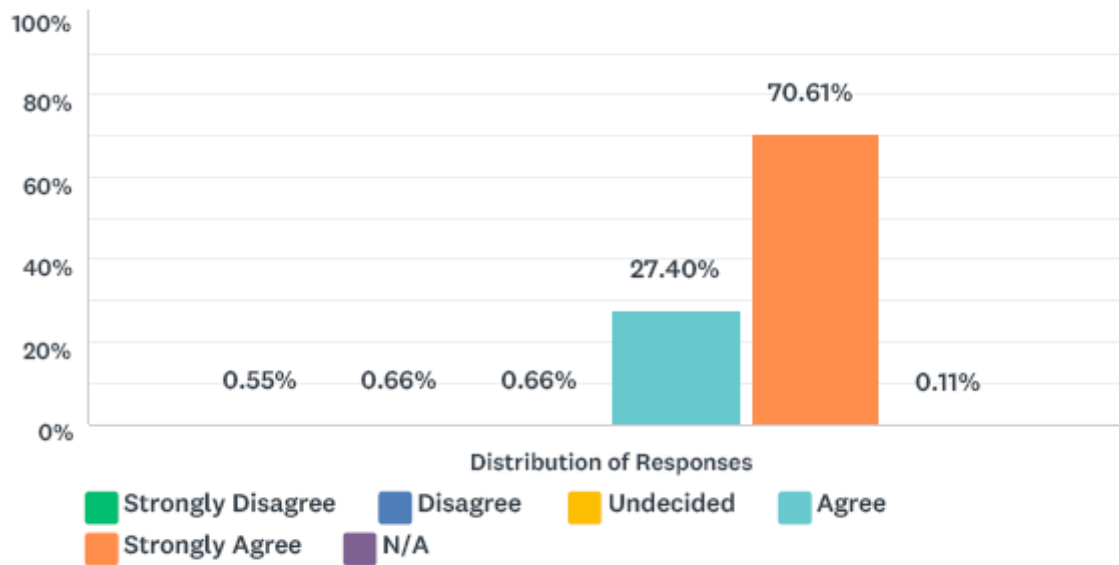
Findings: N = 910; Ranking = 1) Exciting / Interesting (96.4% ≥ agree); 2) Beautiful / Pleasing (93.3% ≥ agree); 3) Calming / Relaxing (85.5% ≥ agree); 4) Emotional / Intense (72.5% ≥ agree)



	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	UNDECIDED (3)	AGREE (4)	STRONGLY AGREE (5)	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Exciting / Interesting	0.45% 4	0.68% 6	2.27% 20	43.60% 385	52.77% 466	0.23% 2	883	4.48
Beautiful / Pleasing	0.57% 5	0.57% 5	4.91% 43	43.54% 381	49.71% 435	0.69% 6	875	4.42
Calming / Relaxing	0.46% 4	4.86% 42	8.10% 70	54.28% 469	31.25% 270	1.04% 9	864	4.12
Emotional / Intense	2.30% 20	9.89% 86	13.10% 114	47.36% 412	25.17% 219	2.18% 19	870	3.85
Upsetting / Annoying	70.98% 604	20.09% 171	3.29% 28	2.00% 17	0.94% 8	2.70% 23	851	1.37
Tiring / Confusing	69.72% 594	23.71% 202	2.00% 17	1.06% 9	0.82% 7	2.70% 23	852	1.35

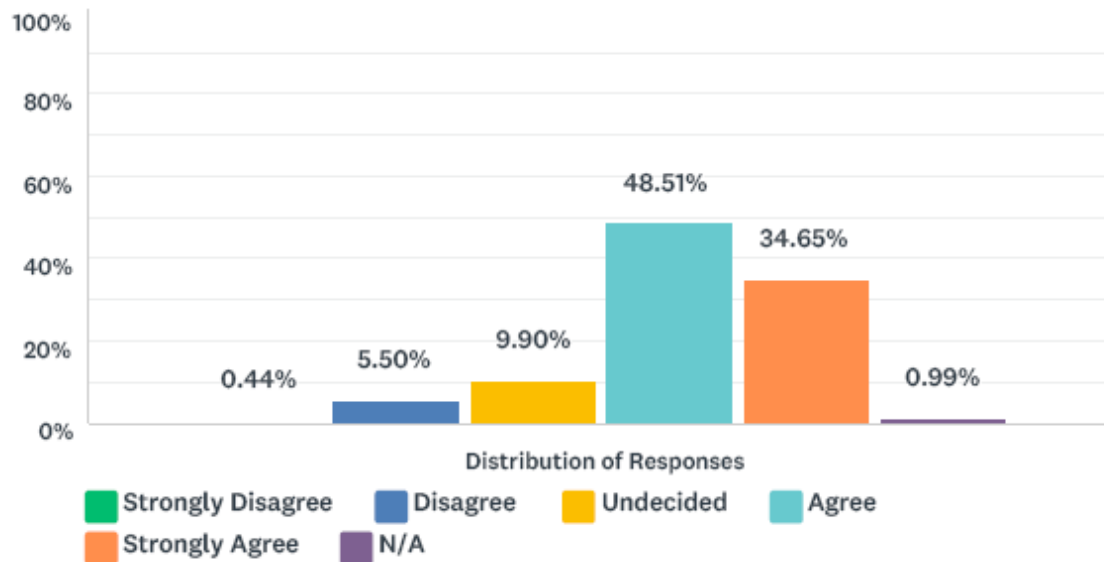
Q3: During my visit, my mind was busy thinking about the place, history, person.

Findings: $N = 905$; $Mean = 4.7$; $SD = 0.58$; $98\% \geq agree$



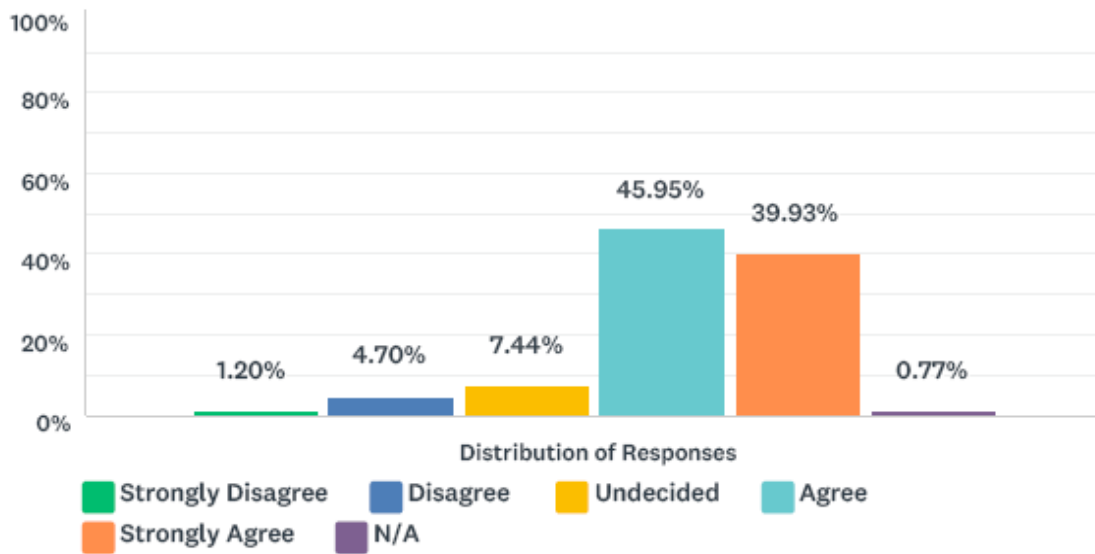
Q4: During my visit, I was aware of the sounds, smells, light, textures, and other sensations of the place.

Findings: $N = 909$; $Mean = 4.1$; $SD = 0.83$; $83.2\% \geq agree$



Q5: During my visit, I was drawn to talk, share my impressions with others, or ask questions.

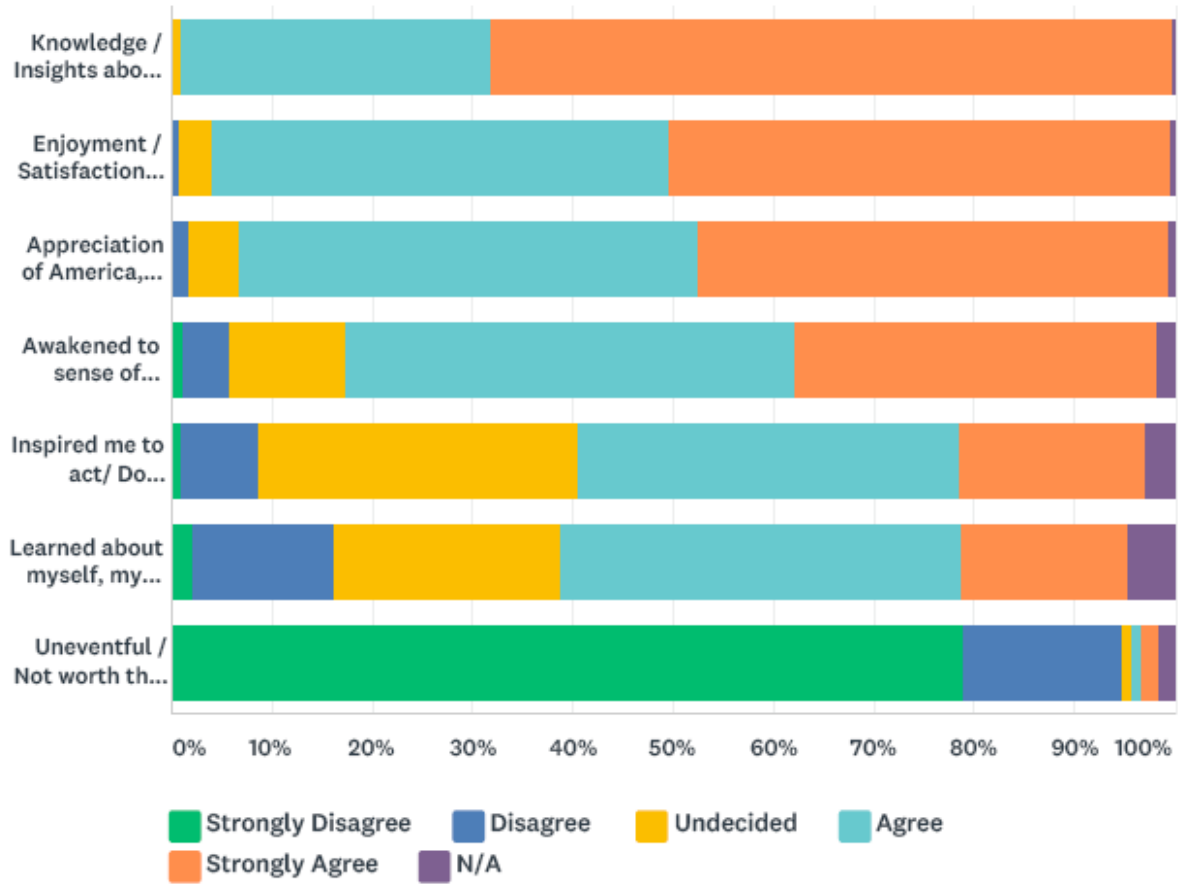
Findings: $N = 914$; $Mean = 4.2$; $SD = 0.86$; $85.9\% \geq \text{agree}$



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Q6: What did you get out of your experience at PLC?

Findings: N = 917; Ranking = 1) Knowledge / Insights (99% ≥ agree); 2) Enjoyment / Satisfaction / Entertainment (95.5% ≥ agree); 3) Appreciation of America (92.8% ≥ agree); 4) Awakened / Empathy / Love (80.9% ≥ agree)

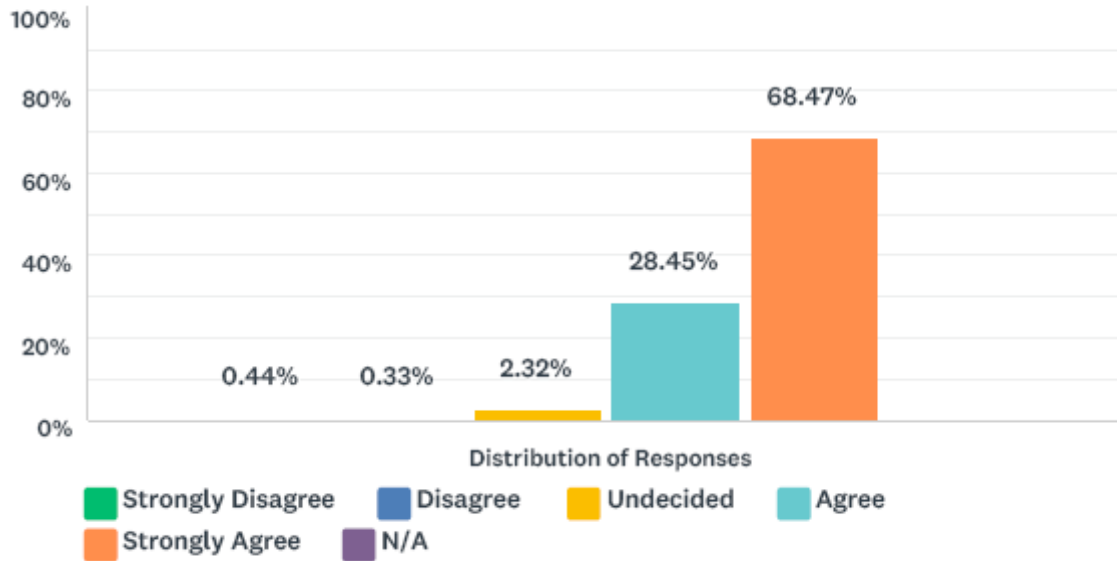


	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	UNDECIDED (3)	AGREE (4)	STRONGLY AGREE (5)	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Knowledge / Insights about Lincoln or history	0.11% 1	0.11% 1	0.66% 6	30.78% 281	68.24% 623	0.11% 1	913	4.67
Enjoyment / Satisfaction / Entertainment	0.11% 1	0.56% 5	3.37% 30	45.51% 405	50.00% 445	0.45% 4	890	4.45
Appreciation of America, government, politics, leaders	0.00% 0	1.66% 15	4.88% 44	45.95% 414	46.84% 422	0.67% 6	901	4.39
Awakened to sense of responsibility / Empathy / Love for humanity	1.01% 9	4.69% 42	11.51% 103	44.80% 401	36.09% 323	1.90% 17	895	4.12
Inspired me to act/ Do something	0.79% 7	7.77% 69	32.09% 285	37.95% 337	18.58% 165	2.82% 25	888	3.68
Learned about myself, my values	1.91% 17	14.19% 126	22.64% 201	39.98% 355	16.67% 148	4.62% 41	888	3.58
Uneventful / Not worth the effort	78.85% 697	15.84% 140	1.13% 10	1.02% 9	1.47% 13	1.70% 15	884	1.28

2) About the Visit

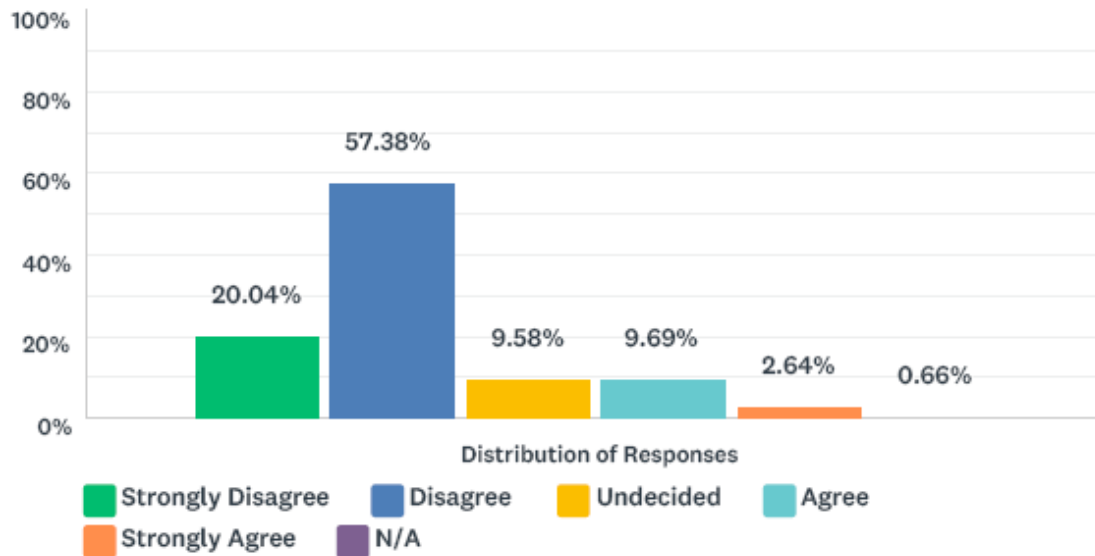
Q8: The tour guide helped me enter into the spirit / mood of PLC.

Findings: $N = 907$; $Mean = 4.6$; $SD = 0.59$; 96.9% \geq agree



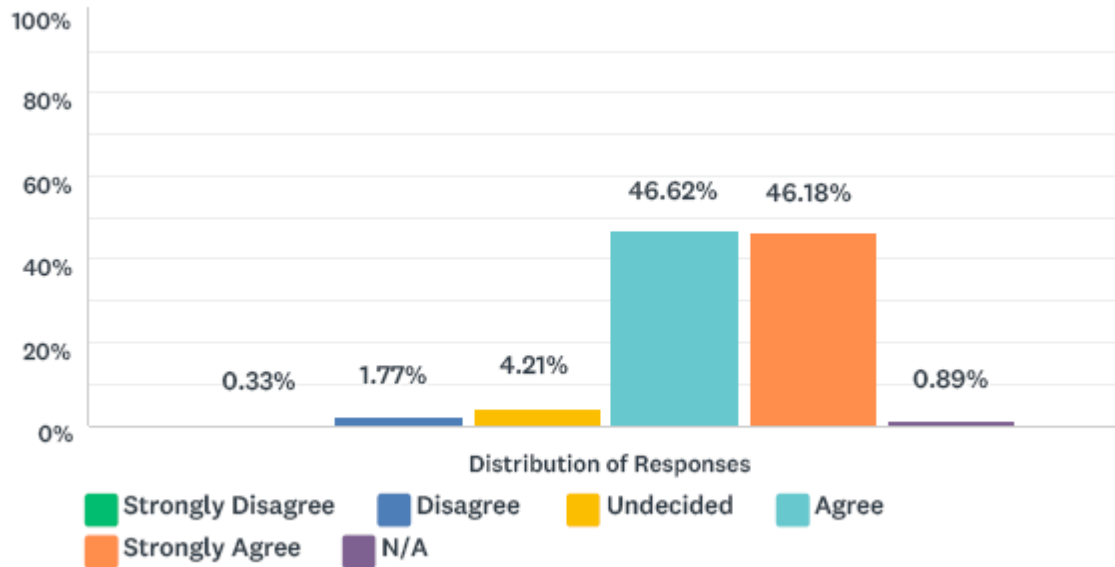
Q9: The tour was not long enough for me to appreciate the place.

Findings: $N = 908$; $Mean = 2.2$; $SD = 0.95$; 77.4% disagree



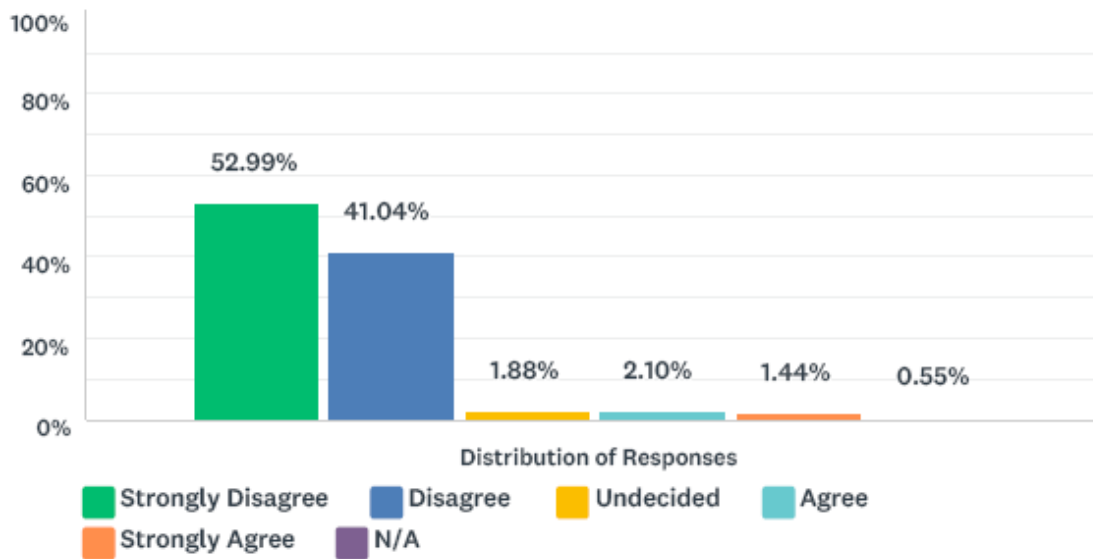
Q10: The fact that I could freely move around, touch, and sit on the furniture added to my experience of PLC.

Findings: $N = 903$; $Mean = 4.4$; $SD = 0.68$; $92.8\% \geq \text{agree}$



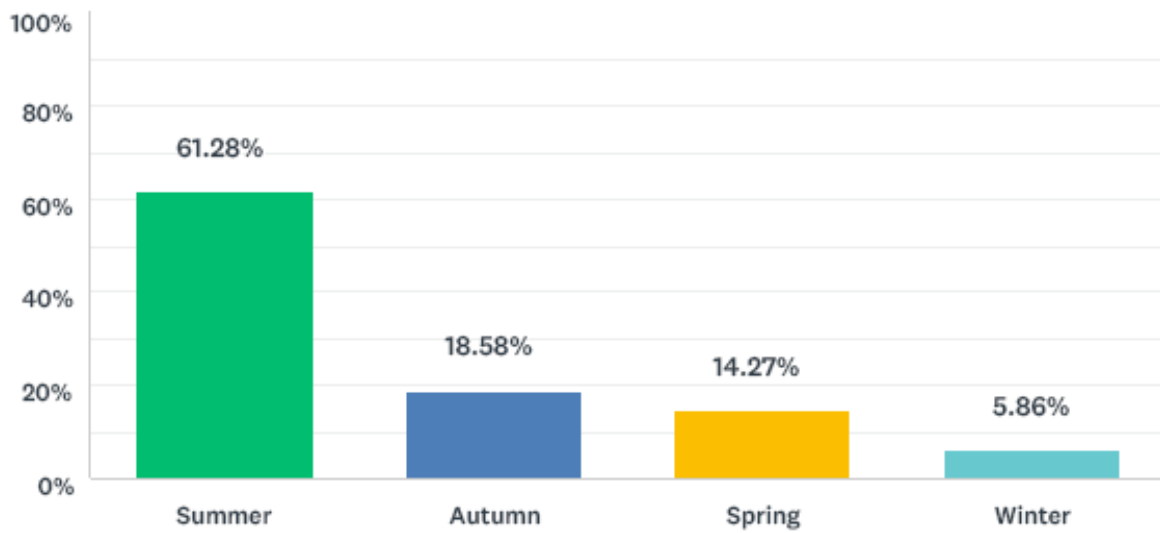
Q11 The tour had too much talking and information to pay attention to or learn.

Findings: $N = 904$; $Mean = 1.6$; $SD = 0.76$; $94\% \geq \text{disagree}$



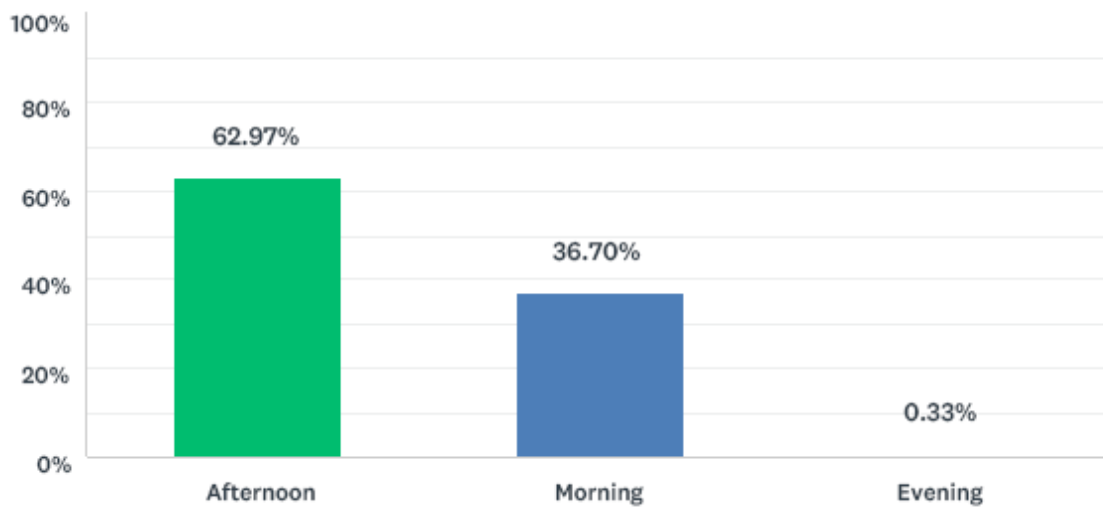
Q12: What time of the year did you visit?

Findings: $N = 904$; $SD = 1.08$; 61.3% Summer



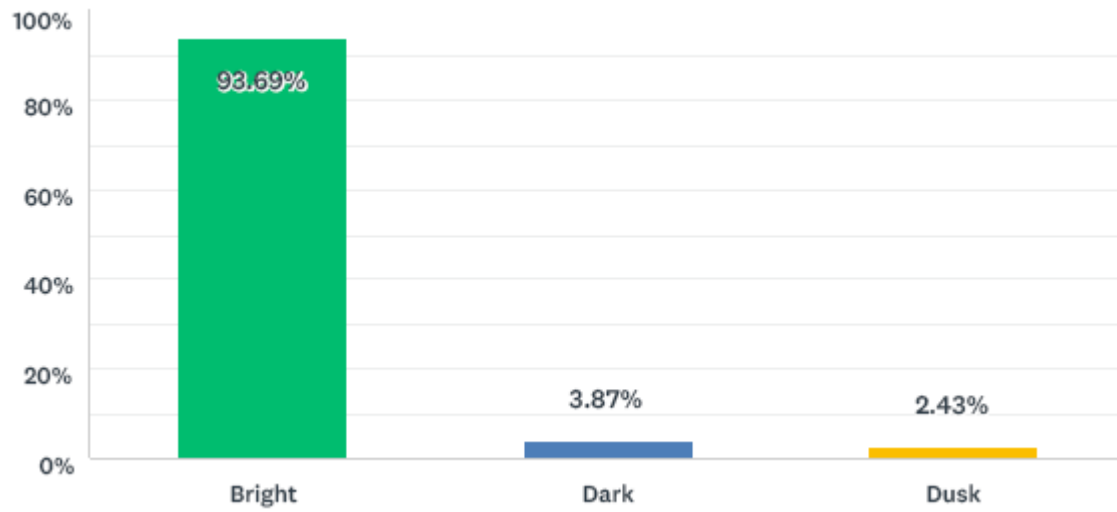
Q13: What time of the day did you visit?

Findings: $N = 910$; $SD = 0.49$; 63% Afternoon



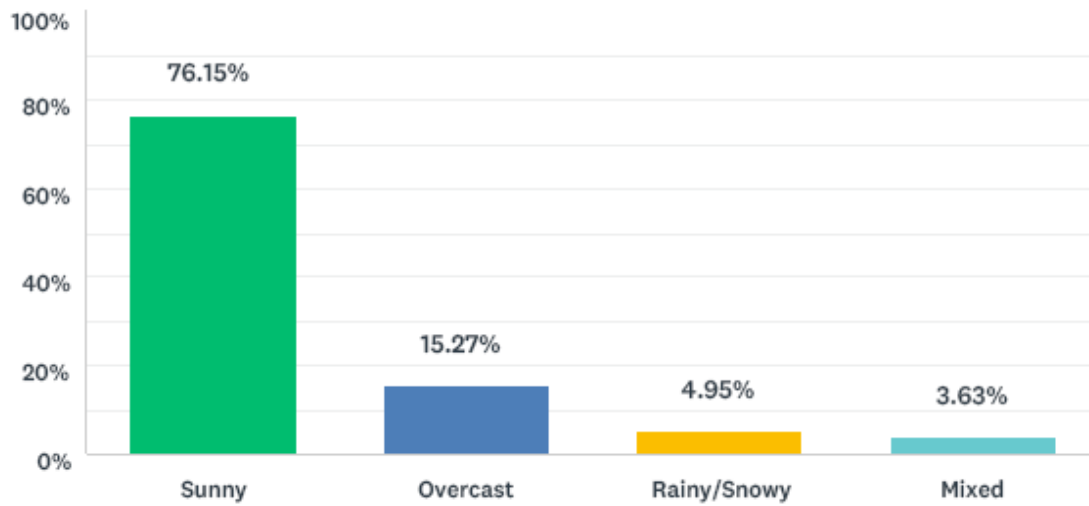
Q14: How would you describe the daylight conditions of your visit?

Findings: $N = 904$; $SD = 0.36$; 93.7% Bright



Q15: How would you describe the weather during your visit?

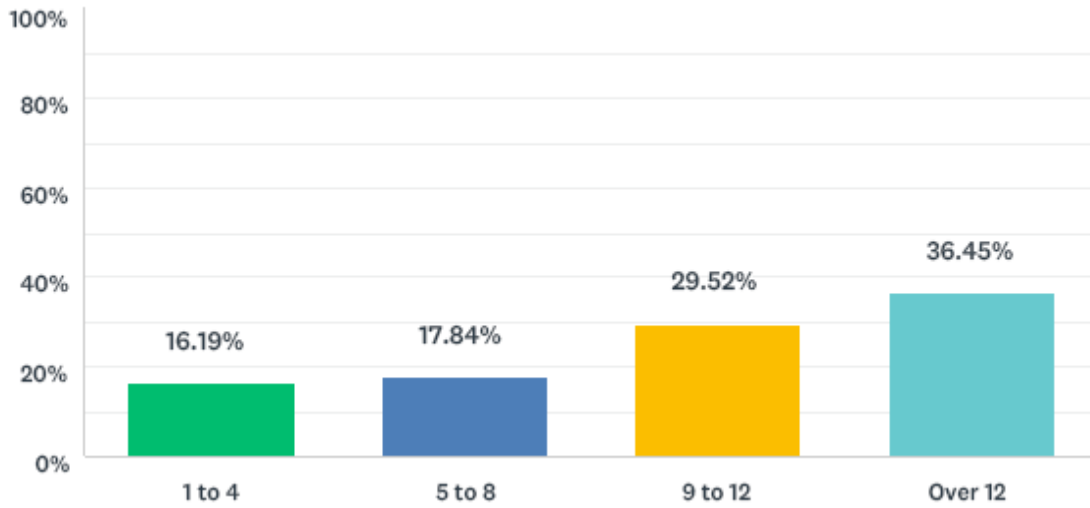
Findings: $N = 910$; $SD = 0.88$; 76.2% Sunny



The Experience of President Lincoln's Cottage

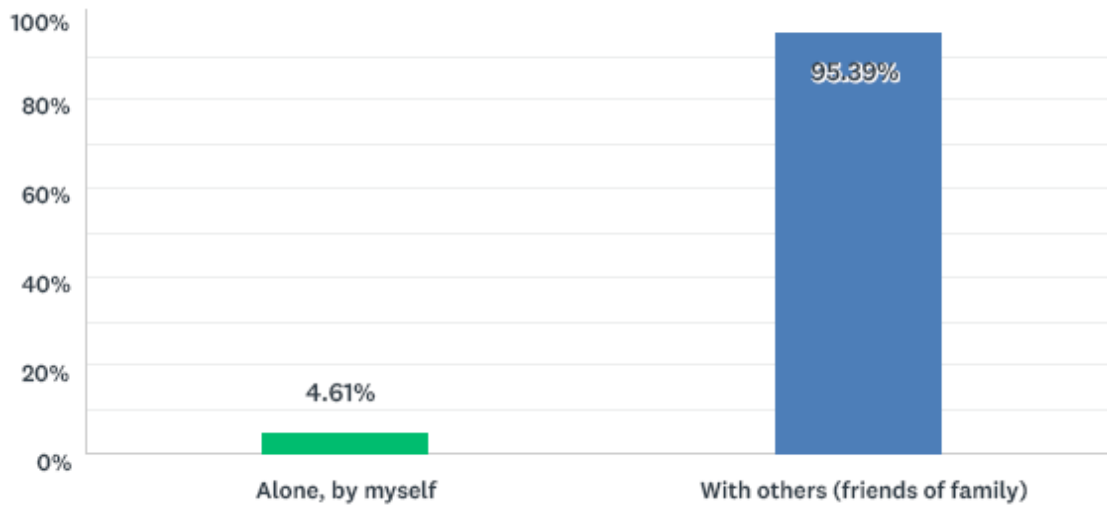
Q16: How many people were on your tour?

Findings: $N = 908$; $Mean = 2.9$; $SD = 1.08$; $66\% \geq 9$ or more



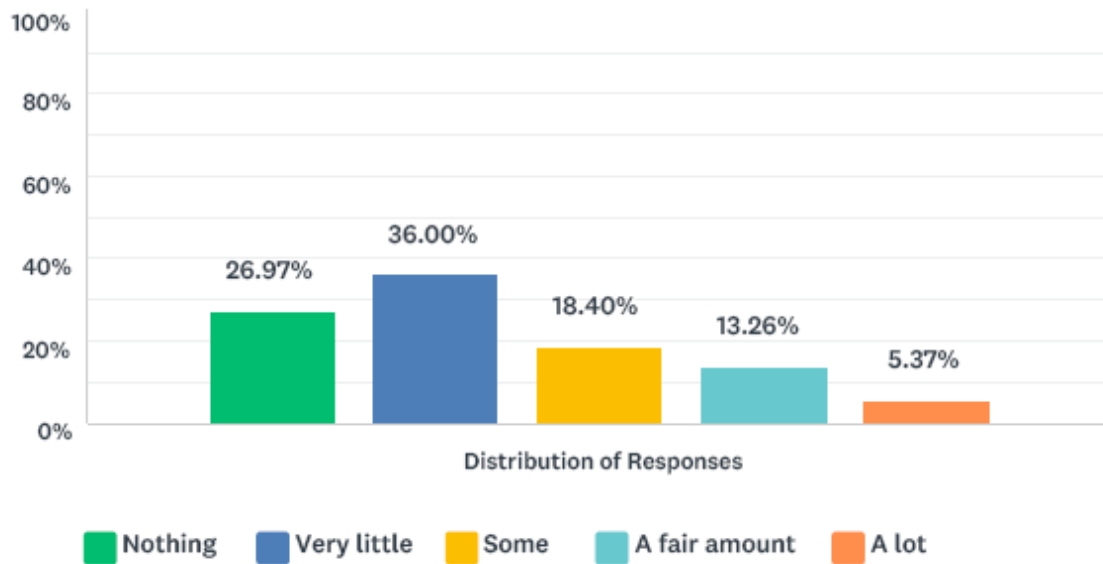
Q17: Please tell us whether you came to PLC alone or with others.

Findings: $N = 890$; $SD = 0.21$; $95.4\% \geq$ With Others



Q19: How much did you know about PLC before your visit?

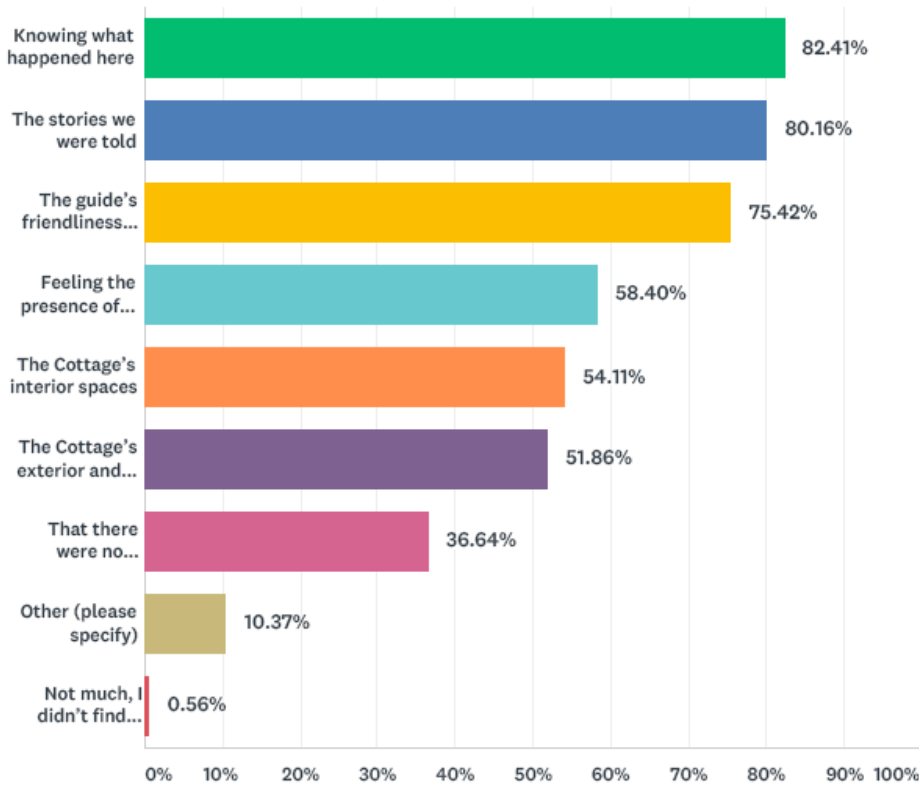
Findings: $N = 875$; $Mean = 2.3$; $SD = 1.16$; 63% \geq Little to Nothing



3) Overall Impressions

Q20: All things considered, what impressed you the most about your visit to PLC? (select all that apply and/or enter your own responses below)

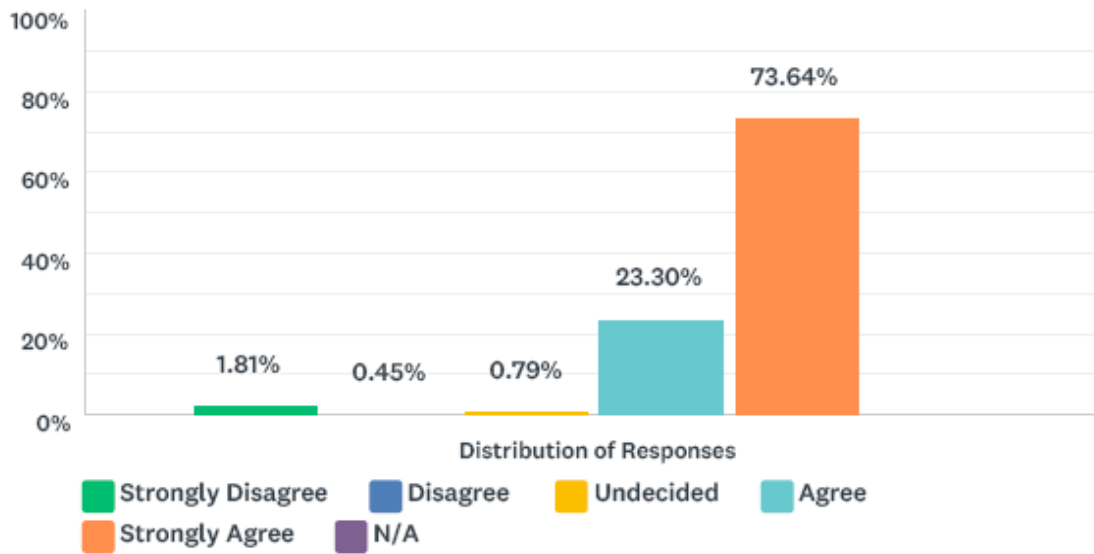
Findings: N = 887; Ranking = 1) Knowing what happened here (82.4%); 2) Stories shared (80.2%); 3) Guide's friendliness (75.4%); 4) Feeling presence of Lincoln in place (58.4%); 5) Interior spaces (54.1%)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Knowing what happened here (3)	82.41%	731
The stories we were told (4)	80.16%	711
The guide's friendliness and knowledge (6)	75.42%	669
Feeling the presence of President Lincoln in this place (8)	58.40%	518
The Cottage's interior spaces (1)	54.11%	480
The Cottage's exterior and its landscape/grounds (2)	51.86%	460
That there were no ropes/barriers limiting my actions and exploration (7)	36.64%	325
Other (please specify) (9)	10.37%	92
Not much, I didn't find this experience engaging (5)	0.56%	5
Total Respondents: 887		

Q21: All things considered, I would recommend the experience to others.

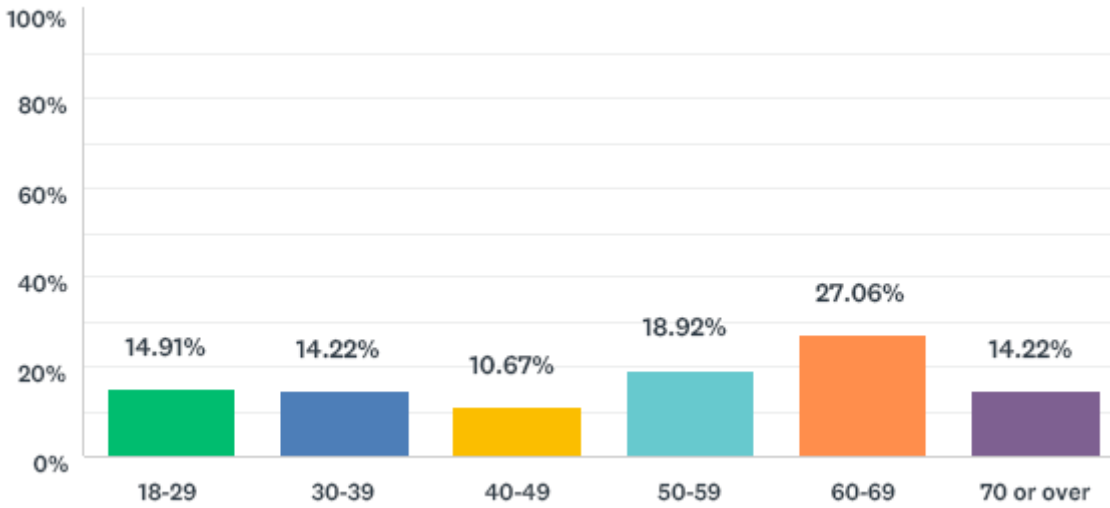
Findings: $N = 884$; $Mean = 4.7$; $SD = 0.69$; $96.9\% \geq \text{Agree}$



4) Demographics

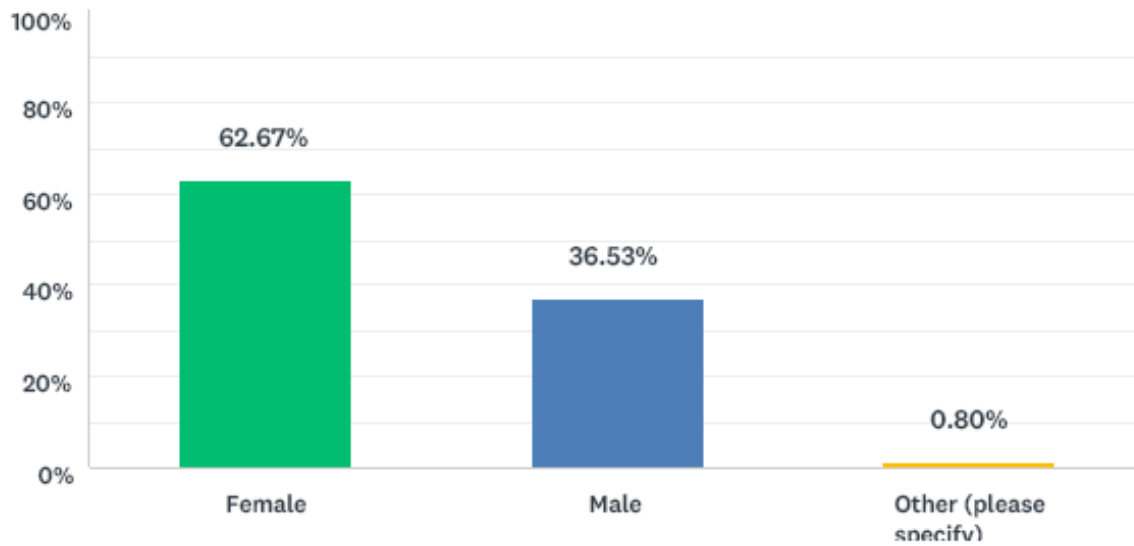
Q23: What is your age?

Findings: $N = 872$; $Mean = 3.7$; $SD = 1.67$



Q24: What is your gender?

Findings: $N = 876$; $SD = 0.50$



Q26: What is your highest level of education completed?

Findings: $N = 861$; $Mean = 4.4$; $SD = 0.77$; $88.5\% \geq \text{College}$

