



# Black Traveler Research

April 2022



# Background

- There is a growing societal interest in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and it is one of many important trends in the travel and tourism industry.
- Visit Williamsburg is interested in understanding how their destination is perceived among different audiences. The destination may ultimately focus on a variety of minority audiences and travelers who identify as LGBTQ+.
- Among Black travelers, Visit Williamsburg faces unique challenges given the role of this community in the historical periods that are represented in this destination.
- As a result, this research is specifically focused upon exploring the attitudes, perceptions and preferences of upscale Black travelers to help understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats Visit Williamsburg faces relative to this audience.

# Objectives

Broadly speaking, the key objectives of this research were to understand upscale Black travelers and their perceptions of the historic triangle as a destination. These informational goals included:

- Exploring the level of familiarity and past experience of this audience with the Visit Williamsburg product.
- Ascertaining levels of interest in visiting and appeal of the destination in the context of Black travelers' prevailing perceptions.
- Identifying key opportunities regarding communications and positioning that could allow greater resonance of the destination with Black travelers.
- Considering product opportunities that could broaden the destination's appeal.
- Providing specific conclusions and recommendations in light of the findings.

# Methodology

- In order to address these informational objectives, a multi-phased research strategy was employed utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research strategies.
- First, 500 upscale Black travelers within driving distance of the destination were surveyed about their perceptions of the area. The research objective was to establish a number of baseline measures that could be compared to the audience as a whole to help identify similarities and differences.
- Additionally, this survey effort was intended to provide preliminary insights to help guide the development of a subsequent qualitative effort. The idea was to help provide context and focus for focus group discussions among respondents recruited from the survey effort.
- At that point, four small group discussions were held with survey respondents to discuss in greater detail their underlying perceptions and attitudes.
- In the report which follows, the findings of both waves of research are reported upon in detail including the quantitative and qualitative findings. Copies of the research instrument and moderator's guide can be found in the appendix. Videos of the group sessions are also available, although excerpts are forwarded in this report.

# Key Findings

- The image of Williamsburg among Black travelers consists of a blend of perceptions of both Busch Gardens and the historic areas. In the quantitative effort, when viewed as a whole, this somewhat obscures the impact of each of these two disparate elements:
  - **Busch Gardens** is widely recognized and was generally the top-of-mind mention whenever Williamsburg was topically introduced. In a prior review of past visitation, a surprisingly high percentage of visitors were Black, but their visitation was predominantly to Busch Gardens and not to any of the historic areas. This attraction was viewed as simply one among several amusement park attractions for kids.
  - The **historic aspects** of the Williamsburg area were somewhat less clearly described or understood – although it was widely recognized among the Black travel audience that there was an historic element to the destination.

# Key Findings

- Interestingly, **Colonial Williamsburg** was almost universally perceived as featuring re-enactments of the Civil War. This seemed a function of several considerations and negative connotations:
  - A perception of what was characterized as a “war re-enactment” wherein the role and treatment of Blacks at the time was presented as though it were acceptable
  - Imagery connected with slavery
  - A perception of Williamsburg as an unrepentant representation of the *Old South*
- These central themes were strongly inter-related and tended to drive the fundamental impressions and resultant appeal of the destination.

# Key Findings

- In a sense, the Old South (as a result of the place being Virginia) is related to slavery, which is related to the Civil War. Whether the historical representation was from this time period was inconsequential.
- The ultimate perception is that the destination glorifies a time in history when mistreatment of Blacks was acceptable. Correcting these perceptions (that the depictions are of the Colonial era) had no impact upon the ultimate take-aways among Black travelers, which were that the history presented:
  - Is one-sided
  - Is someone else's culture
  - Is uncomfortable
  - Lacks acknowledgement that the mistreatment of Blacks was not acceptable
  - Presents historical Blacks in such a way that Black visitors are made to feel inferior
  - Is a portrayal of the past that elicits sadness
- And overall, history is boring. If Black travelers want to see history, they would like it to be Black history. The challenge, in this context, is how to appeal to this population segment.

# Insights

- The answer is not as simple as highlighting a handful of Black historic sites.
- In fact, in two of the focus group sessions, information about the Bray School, the First Baptist Church, and Jolly's Mill Pond generated some passing interest, but this alone was not enough to drive visit interest. Individually these sites were somewhat interesting but more Google-worthy than travel-worthy.
- Some of this stems from the fact that these sites themselves were not a prevailing narrative. Instead, each seemed to be an isolated instance meant to address today's topical interest and seemed to some Black travelers like pandering. In the absence of a bigger, happier story, these sites failed to address the overall issue.
- A broader answer may require rethinking the entire historic presentation and developing sensitivity and training to the way things are presented. This is somewhat of a long view.
- The notion of "Colonial" Williamsburg itself has negative connotations of being taken over. "Historic" or "Today's" Williamsburg would be better alternatives.



# Insights

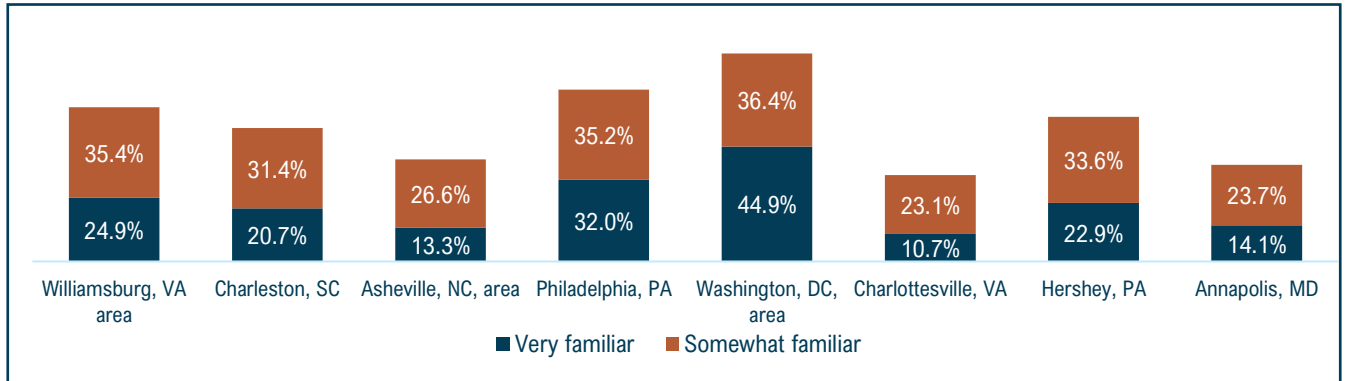
- Appeals need to reach beyond history into the present day to include Black businesses, events and festivals.
- The sample attractions shown seemed to be reaching – something of greatness is needed to be celebrated. How did this element of American history change the world?
- Juneteenth could be an opportunity. While there was some commentary that a Juneteenth celebration would be pandering, it was also seen as incumbent upon the destination to celebrate. Perhaps this event could be used as a springboard to reach out to the local Black community to involve and engage a wider group.
- Credibility is needed – to clearly communicate authenticity and not exploitation. This population is wary of organizations merely checking off boxes in lieu of actually making a meaningful contribution to the Black community. Local involvement, prominent Blacks in the community, and events are needed.
- Working cooperatively with nearby HBCUs as resources could provide important partnership, perspective and credibility.
- Ultimately, the retelling of the narrative needs Black voices if it is to resonate with Black audiences.

# Summary of Findings

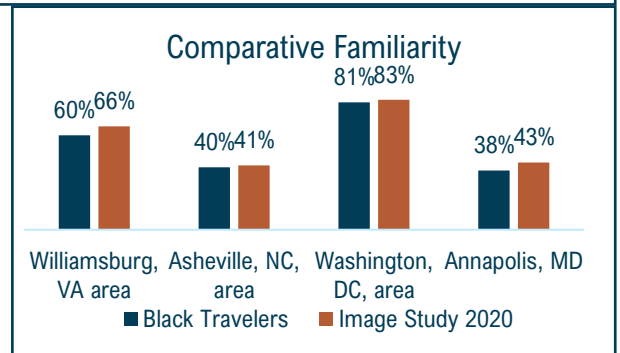
# Travel Behaviors

- At the outset of both the quantitative and qualitative research efforts, overall travel behaviors were explored. In part this was done to set the stage or context of the remainder of the research exploration. However, it also provided a comparative to the target audiences as a whole.
- Interestingly, although not surprisingly, these populations exhibited no real differences from Visit Williamsburg target travelers overall.
- When classified into the travel segments of Cultural Questers, Simple Strivers and Seers and Doors, this group of upscale Black travelers look like the population overall and were fairly evenly divided with a third falling into each of the three groups.
- In the focus group discussions about past travel and travel preferences, the conversations were indistinguishable from every other travel group we typically conduct. There is lots of travel and lots of different interests and preference from beaches and cruises to Vegas and spas.

# Familiarity

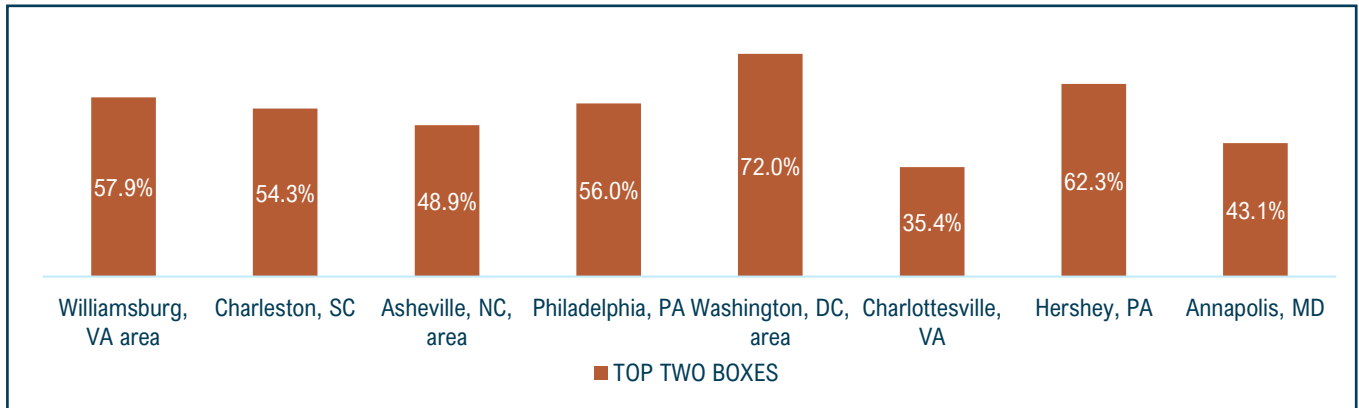


In the context of similar travel behaviors to those typically seen, it should be no surprise the levels of familiarity with Williamsburg and the competitive set mirrored the typical results – with Washington, DC, leading the pack. In fact, when these results are compared to the image study of two years ago the results are nearly identical, with the Black travelers in this study exhibiting just slightly lower familiarity in all cases.



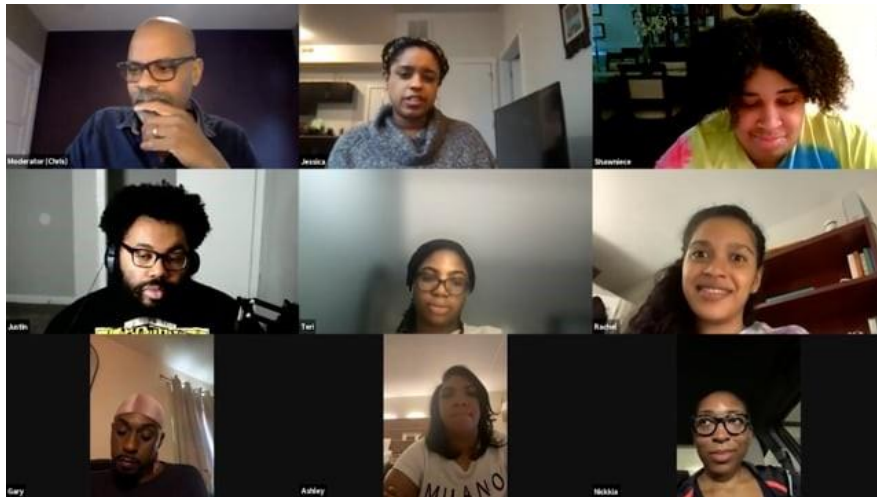
# Overall Destination Perceptions

- When we consider overall ratings of these destinations, the results are generally similar to the familiarity scores. DC is most favored; Hershey and Williamsburg are in the second rather than third tier. In part this is clearly driven by the amusement park appeal. But this suggests that initially there would seem to be little concern with the appeal among the Black audience.



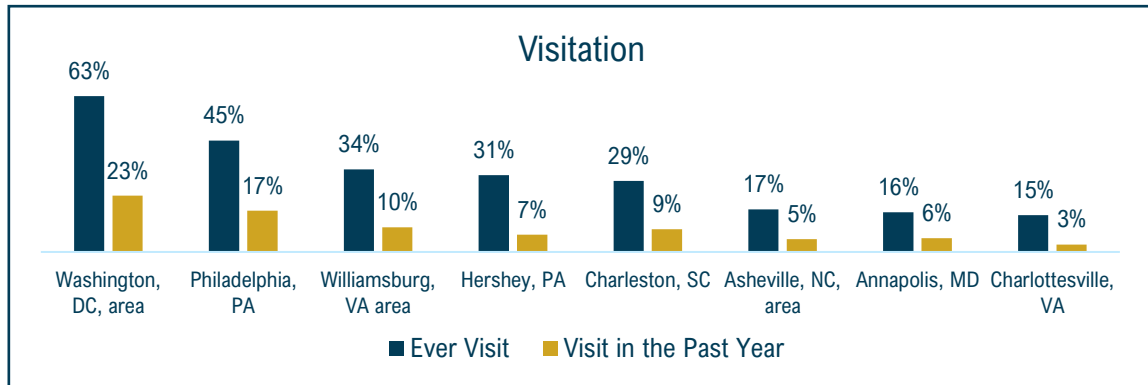
# Top-of-Mind

- When the focus group respondents were asked what came to mind when we mentioned Williamsburg, there were two different types of results: Busch Gardens and an historical focus.



# Visitation

- Not only do travel behaviors, attitudes and destination familiarity look very similar between audiences at large and Black travelers, but so do recent visitation patterns to the Williamsburg area. In the most recent year-end ROI research, 11.5% of those surveyed had visited the area in the past year. Among the Black travelers interviewed for this research, 10% visited the destination in the last year.
- Furthermore, over a third of these travelers have been to the destination as an adult. Overall visitation patterns among this specific audience are illustrated below.



# Image Considerations

- Image assessments are complex and multi-dimensional. In order to attempt to uncover areas of concern, Williamsburg and other members of the competitive set were explored on two sets of attributes.
- One set of attributes were primarily descriptive of the destination, while a second set was more experiential. Both attribute sets included issues of diversity, comfort and inclusion.
- Before we consider these in a competitive context, consider the overall ratings of Williamsburg alone.



# Descriptive Attributes

- With respect to these attributes, one can quickly see the association with Busch Gardens and the historic areas with both of these ratings above 4.0, which is typically a very strong rating.
- It is also safe with lots to do, which are good scores above 3.75.
- Ratings below 3.5 are generally weaknesses, and here we see problem areas especially with regard to Black history, diversity and open-mindedness. These are clearly important issues to explore more deeply.

Family friendly	4.02
Historic sites and landmarks	4.01
The combination of history and entertainment	3.89
A safe place to visit	3.88
Is a good place for adults	3.81
Lots to see and do	3.79
Cultural attractions	3.77
Quality of experience	3.76
Shopping	3.73
A place that is welcoming	3.73
Variety of recreational activities	3.73
Hospitality	3.72
Must-see attractions	3.70
Festivals and events	3.68
Variety of local art and handicrafts	3.66
A balanced depiction of the past	3.65
Value for the money	3.63
Evening activities	3.54
An open-minded place	3.53
A place that invites diversity	3.52
A place with a forward thinking, innovative culture	3.47
Cultural diversity	3.43
Black history sites and landmarks	3.40
Live music and concerts	3.39

# Experiential Attributes

- On the more descriptive attributes, the findings are less directional. Its strongest performance is as a nationally known destination to learn about the past and for both kids and adults.
- However, on the negative side of the ledger, it's not welcoming or inclusive, not relevant or engaging and also seems to lack appeals of vibrancy.
- In simple terms, it's seen as an historic attraction that doesn't appeal to these travelers – despite the fact that they have gone for Busch Gardens.

Has nationally known attractions	3.90
Is a great place to learn about the past	3.88
Is a good place to experience history	3.85
Is a good place for adults	3.81
Is a good place for kids	3.80
Provides a memorable experience with my family	3.79
Offers lodging options that meet my needs	3.78
Is an easy/convenient place to get to	3.77
Is a fun place to visit	3.76
Is a place to learn and discover new things	3.74
Has interesting museums	3.74
Has great local dining	3.67
Offers unique local food experiences	3.67
Has amenities/attractions that I'm interested in	3.65
Is a place I feel comfortable	3.63
A place I would recommend to friends/family	3.62
Makes me feel welcome	3.61
Is a place you can visit over and over again	3.60
Is a place that welcomes people of color	3.58
Is accepting and inclusive	3.56
Is an experience that is relevant to me	3.55
My family/friends would be excited to go	3.50
Is a place that is for me	3.44
Has vibrant downtown district(s)	3.44
Has lots of craft breweries	3.43
Is expensive	3.29
A place I would brag about visiting	3.29
Is crowded	3.25

# Comparative Perceptions

- In the following tables, these image ratings are indexed against the average ratings across destinations; 100 indicates average and 110 is 10% above average, etc. They are also color coded with green being above average and red below.
- Washington clearly dominates, and Charlottesville, VA, does least well – it also has the lowest familiarity and visitation rate.
- Hershey does extremely well at being safe, friendly and welcoming.
- Williamsburg does well on these attributes as well, no doubt by virtue of the Busch Gardens attraction. However, its performance regarding cultural diversity, open-mindedness and Black history are among the lowest. As we will see, this is a function of an image composed of several different attractions.

# Descriptive

RATED	Williamsburg, VA	Charleston, SC	Asheville, NC,	Philadelphia, PA	Washington, DC,	Charlottesville, VA	Hershey, PA	Annapolis, MD
A safe place to visit	105	101	105	90	99	93	108	99
Family friendly	105	99	100	96	105	91	107	97
Historic sites and landmarks	104	95	95	109	115	96	90	95
The combination of history and entertainment	103	99	97	104	109	95	95	97
A balanced depiction of the past	102	103	96	98	110	95	98	99
A place that is welcoming	101	101	99	97	107	90	109	97
Hospitality	101	102	100	98	103	95	103	98
Value for the money	101	99	98	103	101	94	106	97
Variety of local art and handicrafts	101	102	101	101	106	96	100	94
Variety of recreational activities	101	97	102	99	103	94	107	97
Quality of experience	101	99	100	101	108	89	106	97
Cultural attractions	100	98	100	100	110	98	100	94
Is a good place for adults	100	99	103	103	109	91	97	98
Festivals and events	100	100	102	103	107	94	100	94
Lots to see and do	100	96	100	104	110	91	104	96
Shopping	100	101	101	101	102	92	102	101
Must-see attractions	100	96	101	102	115	90	103	93
Evening activities	98	102	98	105	105	93	99	100
A place with a forward thinking, innovative culture	97	98	100	101	110	92	101	101
Black history sites and landmarks	97	104	96	100	117	95	92	100
An open-minded place	97	97	101	101	109	92	103	100
A place that invites diversity	96	98	97	104	114	89	104	99
Cultural diversity	95	96	99	107	112	91	102	98
Live music and concerts	94	101	100	108	102	101	96	98

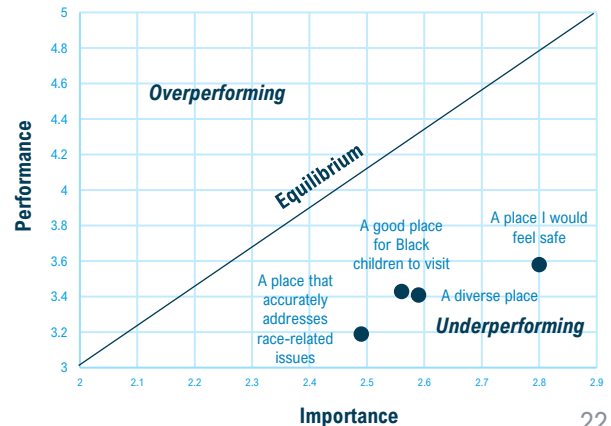
# Experiential

	Williamsburg, VA	Charleston, SC	Asheville, NC	Philadelphia, PA	Washington, DC	Charlottesville, VA	Hershey, PA	Annapolis, MD
Is a great place to learn about the past	105	99	94	104	116	96	90	97
Is a good place to experience history	103	99	97	105	115	89	96	96
Is a good place for kids	103	97	96	96	107	93	111	97
Has interesting museums	102	99	94	106	120	92	92	93
Provides a memorable experience with my family	102	98	98	98	112	89	105	97
Has nationally known attractions	102	95	94	107	113	91	103	95
Is an easy/convenient place to get to	102	102	95	101	101	99	103	98
Is a fun place to visit	101	99	100	104	107	91	108	91
Offers lodging options that meet my needs	101	100	99	97	106	95	104	98
Has lots of craft breweries	101	101	101	98	98	103	93	106
Is a good place for adults	100	99	103	103	109	91	97	98
Is a place to learn and discover new things	99	99	100	101	113	90	98	99
Is expensive	99	97	95	101	110	93	106	99
Is a place you can visit over and over again	99	100	98	99	110	91	102	101
Makes me feel welcome	99	99	101	97	107	89	107	100
A place I would recommend to friends/family	99	100	100	98	110	91	103	99
Is an experience that is relevant to me	99	98	98	102	113	92	96	102
Offers unique local food experiences	99	100	100	109	103	93	96	100
Is a place I feel comfortable	98	97	101	97	109	92	104	102
Is a place that welcomes people of color	98	96	97	104	110	89	105	100
Has amenities/attractions that I'm interested in	98	99	99	101	110	92	103	97
Has great local dining	98	99	98	106	105	96	101	96
Is crowded	97	98	95	109	113	91	101	96
Is accepting and inclusive	97	95	99	101	110	93	105	100
Is a place that is for me	97	100	100	100	110	94	102	96
A place I would brag about visiting	97	101	98	100	109	92	98	106
My family/friends would be excited to go	97	98	98	102	111	90	104	100
Has vibrant downtown district(s)	95	101	97	108	110	92	96	101

# Racial Ratings

- Williamsburg was specifically rated on a series of issues focused upon culture, diversity, experience and race to try to identify particular issues of importance. These were rated on the same 5-point scale where the goal is a 4 or better and scores of 3.5 or less are areas of concern.
- The ratings specifically regarding race are quite poor and clearly indicate a problem from the perspective of Black travelers. Several of these issues were asked in terms of importance and performance. These are charted on the graph and illustrate gaps on these issues.

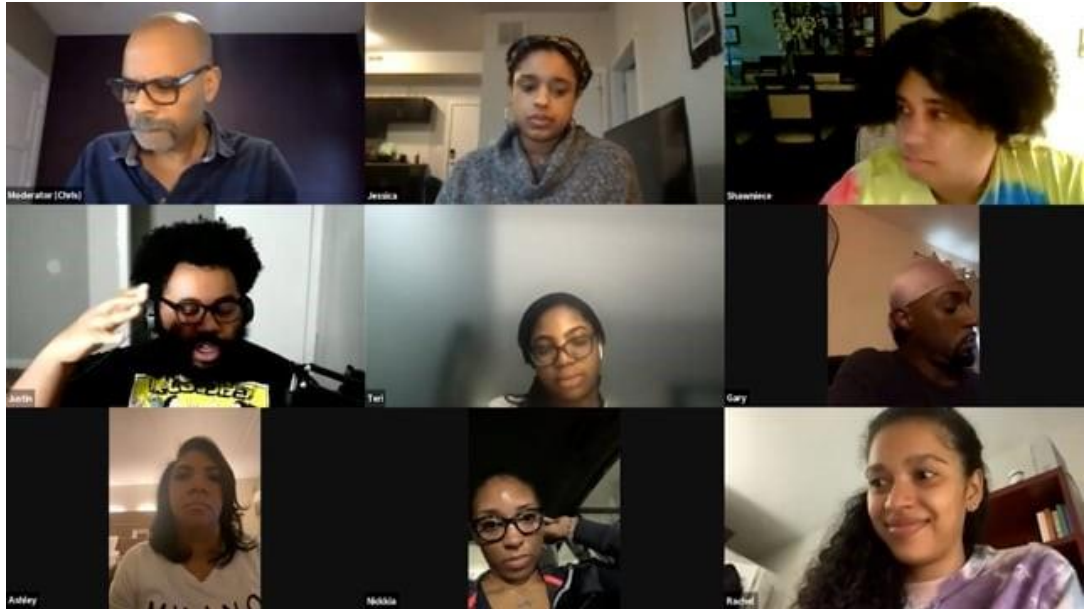
A place to discover history I don't know	3.66
Provides a meaningful experience	3.61
A place I would feel safe	3.58
A good place for Black children to visit	3.43
A diverse place	3.41
A place that would elevate me and my family	3.37
Experiences created from a Black perspective	3.29
Connects me to my cultural heritage	3.24
A place that accurately addresses race-related issues	3.19
Variety of Black-owned businesses	3.11



# Qualitative Observations

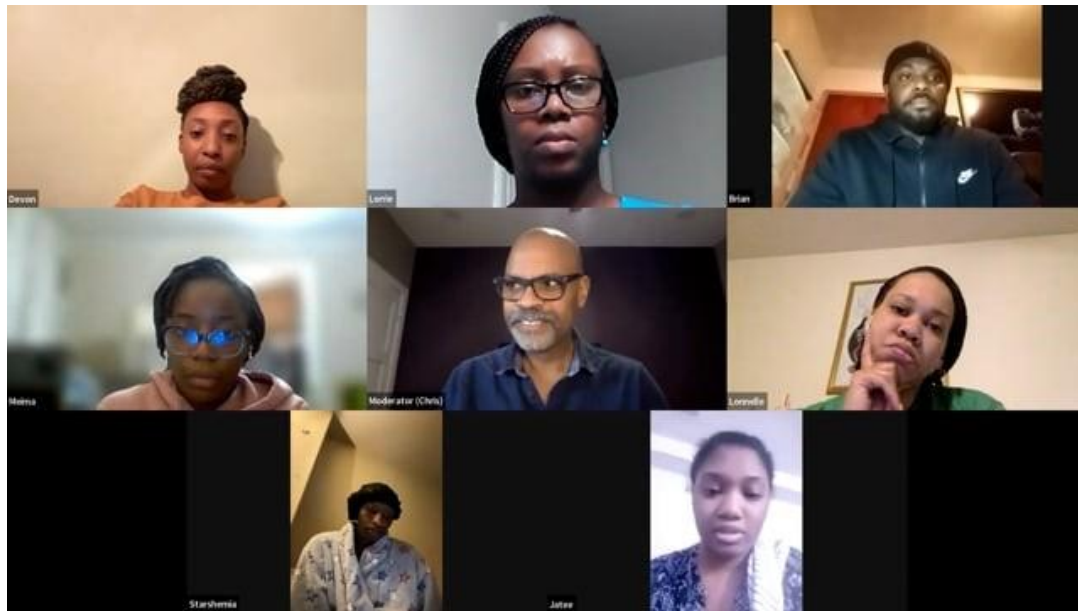
- Clearly the quantitative research illustrates that there are problems among a Black audience with regard to inclusion, diversity and race.
- Understanding the underlying drivers of these attitudes was the focus of the qualitative effort.
- These discussions revealed a number of different contributing factors to the less than positive attitudes about Williamsburg. These include:
  - Location – being in the south and what that means
  - The presentation of history in Colonial Williamsburg
  - The connections with slavery
- Each of these in terms of the actual group discussions are explored in the following pages.

# Location

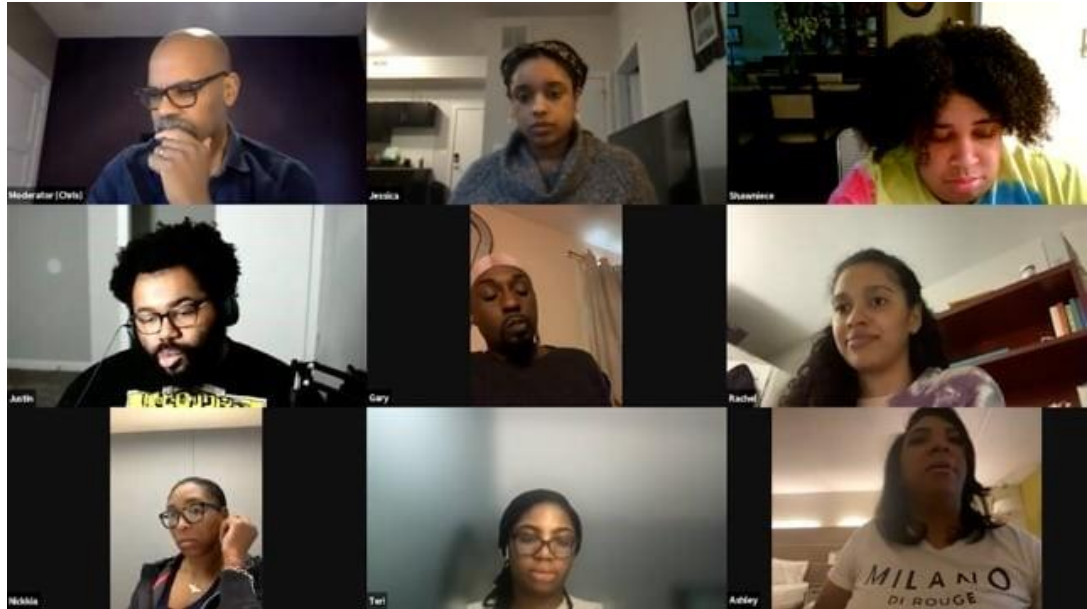




# Williamsburg and the Civil War



# Slavery



# And this results in....



# So what can be done....?



# Appendix

## Qualitative Survey

**Visit Williamsburg  
Black Traveler Research**

ZIP: What is your ZIP code? \_\_\_\_\_

S1. Who in your household is primarily responsible for making decisions concerning travel destinations?

Me

Me and my spouse/partner

My spouse/partner → TERMINATE AFTER SCREENING QUESTIONS

S2. Please indicate if each of the following applies to you...

[ROTATE]	Yes	No
I regularly use social media like Facebook, Twitter or Instagram		
I normally take at least two leisure trips a year that involve an overnight stay or are at least 50 miles from home		TERMINATE AFTER SCREENING QUESTIONS IF BOTH ARE NO
I am currently planning or have already planned an upcoming leisure trip		
I engage in skiing, snowmobiling and/or other outdoor winter activities		
I use video streaming services like Hulu, Netflix or Amazon		

S3. What of the following best describes your ethnic heritage? Select all that apply. [ALLOW MULTI]

Caucasian/White

African-American/Black → QUALIFIES AFTER SCREENER

Asian

American Indian or Alaska Native

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

S3A. Do you identify as Hispanic or Latino? YES/NO

S4. What is your age? \_\_\_\_ TERMINATE AFTER SCREENING QUESTIONS IF < 18 [AIM FOR 1/3 PER AGE GROUP]

S5. Approximately how many leisure trips have you taken in the past year? \_\_\_\_\_

S6. Overall, including all of your leisure trips, approximately how many nights did you spend away from home on leisure trips this year? \_\_\_\_\_

S7. Which of the following categories best represents the total annual income for your household before taxes?

less than \$30,000 -> TERMINATE AFTER SCREENING QUESTIONS

\$30,000 - \$39,999 -> TERMINATE AFTER SCREENING QUESTIONS

\$40,000 - \$49,999 -> TERMINATE AFTER SCREENING QUESTIONS

\$50,000 - \$59,999

\$60,000 - \$74,999

\$75,000 - \$99,999

\$100,000 - \$124,999

\$125,000 - \$149,999

\$150,000 or more

Q1. Which of the following places have you ...?

[ROTATE]	A. Ever visited for a leisure trip (Not just as a kid)?	B. Visited in the past year? [ALLOW ONLY IF EVER VISITED]
Williamsburg, VA, area – including Colonial Williamsburg, Busch Gardens, Williamsburg shopping centers/ outlets, Jamestown, Yorktown		
Charleston, SC		
Asheville, NC, area – including the Biltmore Estate and Grove Park Inn		
Philadelphia, PA		
Washington, DC, area – including the Smithsonian museums, National Zoo, Capitol Hill, Georgetown University		
Charlottesville, VA		
Hershey, PA – including The Boardwalk at Hersheypark		
Annapolis, MD		

Visitor: Visited Williamsburg in the past year

Past Visitor: Visited Williamsburg but not in the past year

Non-Visitor: Visited a competitor ever (doesn't need to be in the past year)

None: all others

Q2. Please indicate how familiar you are with each of the following destinations in terms of what they have to offer as a place to visit on a leisure or non-business trip.

[ROTATE]	Not at all familiar	Not very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Very familiar
Williamsburg, VA, area – including Colonial Williamsburg, Busch Gardens, Williamsburg shopping centers/ outlets, Jamestown, Yorktown				
Charleston, SC				
Asheville, NC, area – including the Biltmore Estate and Grove Park Inn				
Philadelphia, PA				
Washington, DC, area – including the Smithsonian museums, National Zoo, Capitol Hill, Georgetown University				
Charlottesville, VA				
Hershey, PA – including The Boardwalk at Hersheypark				
Annapolis, MD				

Q3. How would you rate each of these destinations as a place to visit for a leisure trip?

[ROTATE]	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Don't know
Williamsburg, VA, area – including Colonial Williamsburg, Busch Gardens, Williamsburg shopping centers/ outlets, Jamestown, Yorktown						
Charleston, SC						
Asheville, NC, area – including the Biltmore Estate and Grove Park Inn						
Philadelphia, PA						
Washington, DC, area – including the Smithsonian museums, National Zoo, Capitol Hill, Georgetown University						
Charlottesville, VA						

Hershey, PA – including The Boardwalk at Hersheypark									
Annapolis, MD									

Q4. How likely are you to visit the following places for a leisure trip in the next year?

[ROTATE]	Not at all likely	Not very likely	Somewhat likely	Very likely	Already planning a trip
Williamsburg, VA, area – including Colonial Williamsburg, Busch Gardens, Williamsburg shopping centers/ outlets, Jamestown, Yorktown					
Charleston, SC					
Asheville, NC, area – including the Biltmore Estate and Grove Park Inn					
Philadelphia, PA					
Washington, DC, area – including the Smithsonian museums, National Zoo, Capitol Hill, Georgetown University					
Charlottesville, VA					
Hershey, PA – including The Boardwalk at Hersheypark					
Annapolis, MD					

ASK Q5 AND Q6 FOR WILLIAMSBURG IF AT LEAST NOT VERY FAMILIAR FROM Q1. ALSO ASK OF ONE COMPETITOR OF MOST SIMILAR FAMILIARITY.

Q7. Based on whatever you know about the Williamsburg area and attractions, how would you rate the area on the following?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent
[ROTATE]				
A place I would feel safe				
A diverse place				
A place that accurately addresses race-related issues				
A good place for Black children to visit				
Connects me to my cultural heritage				
A place to discover history I don't know				
Provides a meaningful experience				
A place that would elevate me and my family				
Variety of Black-owned businesses				
Experiences created from a Black perspective				

Q8. [FOR EACH ATTRIBUTE THAT IS RATED 1 OR 2] Why do you feel that Williamsburg is not an ATTRIBUTE? \_\_\_\_\_

Segment. Here are some statements about your attitudes toward vacation travel – please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Group	Segment	DISAGREE		AGREE	
			Completely	Somewhat	Somewhat	Completely
On my vacations, I like to visit places I'm familiar with	3	Simple Strivers				
My trips usually include visits to museums and historic sites	1	Cultural Questers				
Vacations should maximize the amount of things you see and do	2	See-ers and Do-ers				

Strategic Marketing & Research Insights.

3

Leisure travel should be relaxing and easy to both plan and enjoy	3	Simple Strivers				
I like to experience the arts and culture of the places I visit	1	Cultural Questers				
We do so much on our trips that I need to rest when I return	2	See-ers and Do-ers				
I like to visit places that are easy to get to and to get around in	3	Simple Strivers				
I think that travel is an opportunity to learn	1	Cultural Questers				
I value experiences over getting the best price.	1	Cultural Questers				

TERMINATE IF ANSWER ALL 1s OR 4s.

Put into group with highest Mean.

- Cultural Questers
- See-ers and Do-ers
- Simple Strivers

#### Demographics Section

The following questions are for classification purposes only so that your responses may be grouped with those of others.

#### DO NOT FORCE DEMOS

Marital. Are you currently...?

- Married/With partner
- Single (never married)
- Divorced
- Widowed

Household. Including yourself, how many people are currently living in your household? \_\_\_\_

ASK KIDS IF HOUSEHOLD > 1

Kids. How many children under the age of 18 live in your household? \_\_\_\_

Education. Which of the following categories represents the last grade of school you completed?

- Some high school
- High school graduate
- Some college or 2-year college degree
- 4-year college degree
- Graduate studies or graduate degree

Gender. Do you identify as...?

- Male
- Female
- Nonbinary
- Prefer not to answer

Orientation. Do you identify as LGBTQ+ or travel regularly with someone who does?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

Employment. Which of the following best describes your employment status?

Strategic Marketing & Research Insights.

4

- Employed, full time
- Employed, part time
- Self-employed
- Student
- Retired
- Not employed
- Prefer not to answer

**FOCUS GROUP SCREENER**

	DATE	EST
<b>GROUP 1</b>	Wednesday, March 23	5:30 – 7:00 PM
<b>GROUP 2</b>	Wednesday, March 23	7:30 – 9:00 PM
<b>GROUP 3</b>	Thursday, March 24	5:30 – 7:00 PM
<b>GROUP 4</b>	Thursday, March 24	7:30 – 9:00 PM

RECRUITING FOR FOUR GROUPS, MIX OF VISITORS AND NON. RECRUIT PAST VISITORS TO Williamsburg Q1A, as well as NON-VISITORS if they have visited at least one in the COMPETITIVE SET AT Q1A.

**INVITATION**

We would like to invite you to participate in an ONLINE VIDEO FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION regarding LEISURE TRAVEL, which will include individuals like yourself. The group will take place on our Zoom Platform.

During the online discussion group, you will be required to log in and fully participate for the entire 90 minutes. For your time and opinions, you will receive a \$150 Amazon online gift card.

Are you available and interested in participating in this online video discussion group focusing on attractions on the following dates/times?

Select all dates you are available. We will be back in touch to confirm your group assignment.

Wednesday, March 23 from 5:30-7:00pm

Wednesday, March 23 from 7:30-9:00pm

Thursday, March 24 from 5:30-7:00pm

Thursday, March 24 from 7:30-9:00pm

Not available or interested in participating

THANK YOU

Thank you for your interest and willingness to participate in our online group discussion. We will contact you via email in the next few days to confirm your spot in the group as well as your availability to participate. The email will be sent from:

From: Shelly Lindley ([slindley@smarinsights.com](mailto:slindley@smarinsights.com))  
Subject: ONLINE FOCUS GROUP - CW

To confirm your interest in participating, please provide the following information.

**RECORD THE FOLLOWING:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

VERIFY EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_



# Appendix

## Moderator's Outline

Williamsburg Black/African American Webcam Groups  
Qualitative Discussion Guide (90-mins each)

OBJECTIVES

We will speak with Black consumers to better understand...

- What resonates as key components of an ideal vacation? Who/what influences them as they plan their vacations? What kinds of vacations are repeatable?
- What are their perceptions, barriers, tipping points, intent for planning and taking Williamsburg vacations at all/more frequently? What are the motivators? Dig deeply into turn-offs and deterrents.
  - What is their awareness and previous experiences with Williamsburg, if applicable?
  - Are there any external/additional hesitations and barriers to visit Williamsburg?
- What do Black consumers enjoy about vacationing at competitive destinations: DC, Philadelphia, domestic vs. international, beach, all-inclusive, etc.?
- How can Williamsburg increase the motivation and appeal of a vacation among Black consumers in any ways?

INTRODUCTION – 10 MINS

Goal: Warm up respondent, interview protocols and introductions.

- Welcome!
- Before we start, a few things I want you to know:
  - The purpose of this is to gain more insight into your responses and learn more about you, your family, and what's important to you and your family
  - Video & audio recording, I may pause every now and then to check in with my colleague who is watching and taking notes –to see if they have any additional questions that I may have missed
  - I am an independent market researcher--I don't work at any of the companies or products we'll be talking about today; don't worry about hurting my feelings or trying to say things that you think I might want to hear!
  - There are no wrong answers AND it is ok to have positive or negative things to say. We want to hear it all
  - Check for questions, concerns, and understanding of the process
- Great! Let's jump right in...
  - Please give us a brief :30 introduction: first name, where you live, and who lives with you in your home
  - We're going to be talking about travel today... briefly tell a driving vacation you have taken in the recent past. Why that destination? What kinds of things did you do?

APPROACH TO VACATIONING – 15-20 MINS

Goal: Understand their vacation choices and how/why they make their choices.

Let's continue talking about vacationing:

- What is the purpose of a vacation or trip for you?

- How often do you vacation? What determines when you travel? What events or times of year drive you to travel?
- There are all types of vacations you might take. How would you summarize your likely or typical vacation in a couple of words?
  - What kinds of activities do you do?
  - What do you want to achieve on a vacation like this?
  - Where are some of the places you like to go to give you what you want in a vacation – (both generically, like the beach and specifically like Jamaica)? Why those places?
  - Kids places? Adults' places?
- How do you choose where you vacation...what are the factors that are important to you in choosing?
- Have you ever taken the same vacation twice? What kinds of vacations are repeatable? What makes you want to go back to a place?
- ~~How do you think your vacation compares to other races/ethnicities...similarly or differently? How so? Are there any compromises you make? Things/places you don't/won't do or go because of your race?~~
- Tell me about your vacation planning process...
  - What are the steps in the process?
  - Where do you get your information?
  - How do you "normally" travel to your vacation destinations (e.g., drive, fly, cruise, etc.)? Is this an important consideration in vacation choice?
- Talk to me about your last trip: where, when, who, why/occasion
  - How was it?
  - What other places did you consider, and why?
  - What was the tipping point that drove your choice?
- Beyond work, are there other traveling occasions that you take part in? Probe/listen for family reunions, weddings, bachelor/-ette parties

CONCEPT EXPOSURE – 10-15 MINS

Goal is to understand which Williamsburg features are of interest in general...will help us understand if it is a marketing or product issue.

- Consider showing descriptions of Williamsburg features, unbranded to garner interest and appeal
  - Gut Reaction
  - Benefit
  - Ranking of interest/motivation to vacation
  - +/-

ZEROING IN ON WILLIAMSBURG – 30 MINS

Goal: Ascertain role Williamsburg plays/can play/cannot play in their lives.

- What do you think about the idea of vacationing in Williamsburg?
  - What is the first thing that comes to mind?
  - What adjectives or feelings come to mind when you think of a Williamsburg visit?

- What is your picture of the typical Williamsburg vacationer? How similar or dissimilar are they from you?
- Why would someone choose to vacation in Williamsburg?
- What comes to mind when you think of Williamsburg?
  - What Williamsburg parks, attractions and experiences are you aware of? What all does Williamsburg offer?
  - Imagine a Williamsburg trip/visit: why/what occasion? With whom?
  - Can it satisfy other types of trips beyond what you just described? Probe for reunions, friends trips, showers, bachelor/-ette parties, etc.
  - Who do you see as the ideal Williamsburg guest...describe them in detail.

#### Past Guests

- How many times have you been to Williamsburg in the past? What made you go there for vacation? What were you looking to do?
  - What time of year did you visit (summer, holidays, etc.)? Why then?
- What role did Williamsburg play in your choice to come to it? Was it the area main reason for the trip?
- How many times have you been to Williamsburg in the past?
- Tell me about that last time:
  - How many days was your vacation? How many of those days did you visit Williamsburg?
  - What Williamsburg activities did you do? Which theme parks/attractions did you visit?
  - What other activities or attractions, if anything, did you do in Williamsburg besides Williamsburg?
- Where did you stay? Why there? Listen/probe for whether they stayed on vs. off Williamsburg properties.
  - Why did you choose to stay at that location (appeal, benefits)?
  - What types of hotel/resort amenities do you want/expect?
  - What did you like about staying there?
  - How did you get to Williamsburg? How did this affect your choice of where to stay?
- What made you choose Williamsburg over other destinations?
  - How did Williamsburg get on your radar?
  - (For multiple attendees) Why have you come more than one time?
- What are the best and worst things about Williamsburg?
- How do you feel about the cost of a Williamsburg vacation?
  - Listen/probe for perceptions of "expensive"
  - Is it worth it? Why or why not?
- Where else did you consider going? What made you choose Williamsburg over other destinations?
- How do you feel about Williamsburg from a black traveler's perspective? Is it welcoming, unwelcoming, or neutral? Why so?
  - Did you feel welcomed? How so? What does Williamsburg do to make you feel this way? Was that part of the reason you chose to visit Williamsburg?
  - If not welcomed, what could Williamsburg have done/do to make you feel that way?

- On your trips to Williamsburg, do you notice many Black/AA travelers? Why do you suppose that is? Do it matter to you? Why/why not?
- What would you say about Williamsburg to a black friend of yours who comes to you asking for vacation advice?
- What's the right age to bring kids to Williamsburg? Why?
- For one-time visitors, is Williamsburg a place you would come back to? Why or why not?

#### Intenders

- Tell me more about Williamsburg...if you were to write/show an ad about it, what things would you include in it?
- What would you say the best things about a Williamsburg vacation?
- What about downsides to a Williamsburg vacation? Are these downsides unique to Williamsburg or are they similar with other places you like to visit? What is missing? What do you need to hear?
- How do you feel about the cost of a Williamsburg vacation?
  - Listen/probe for perceptions of "expensive"
  - Is it worth it? Why or why not?
- [Ask for those who have never been]
  - You have traveled and do take vacations... Why haven't you been to Williamsburg ... What has kept you away? Why is it not in your consideration set? What do you think is missing from the Williamsburg experience that you'd want?
  - Some of you have even mentioned coming to Williamsburg but not Williamsburg. Why Williamsburg *and* not Williamsburg?
    - Probe for perceptions of "expensive" and drivers of perceptions
- For any other places beyond Williamsburg, what makes that a better vacation choice for you?
- If you were to visit Williamsburg, how would you need to get there? Does this mode of travel affect your decisions at all? How so?
- Where do you prefer to go instead? Why? Listen/probe for other theme parks.
- How do you feel about Williamsburg from a black traveler's perspective? Is it welcoming, unwelcoming, or neutral? Why so?
- What would you say about Williamsburg to a black friend of yours who comes to you asking for vacation advice?
- What might interest you in visiting Williamsburg? Listen/probe for (promotions, product, events, more information about the breadth of offerings, etc.)?

#### CLOSING – 10 MINS

- How does your race affect your vacation choices, if at all?
  - Are there specific locations/places or destinations you choose to visit or avoid because of your race? What about parts of the country? Specific activities?

- Are there places you feel more welcomed? What is it about them?
- Similarly, are there places you feel less welcomed? Where and why?
- Can anyone share a particular first-hand vacationing experience that has shaped or influenced the vacation choices you make today?
  - What about second-hand experiences? What concessions or judgments do you make based on what you've experienced or heard from others?
- 
- Just curious...what other high ticket/lux items do you buy?
  - What makes these of interest to you? Listen/probe for status, image, etc.
  - How does an expensive vacation play into this? Does it have the same degree of importance or impact for you?
- In closing, what would you do to make Williamsburg more of a top vacation choice for black travelers?
  - Changes?
  - More of? Less of?

Check for final questions, reminder of confidentiality, and dismiss participants