



**ACCESS AND ARTIFACT HANDLING
Workshop Part A**
Marie Desrochers
Utah Division of Arts and Museums
January 6, 2022: Summit County Historical Museum
10 am - 5 pm





PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Year at a Glance

<p>1. ACCESS AND ARTIFACT HANDLING</p> <p>JANUARY Workshop (pt A & B) FEBRUARY 1. Webinar MARCH 2. Webinar 3. Webinar</p>	<p>3. ENVIRONMENT AND BUILDING SYSTEMS</p> <p>JULY Workshop (pt A & B) AUGUST 1. Webinar SEPTEMBER 2. Webinar 3. Webinar</p>
<p>2. PRESERVATION IN STORAGE AND DISPLAY</p> <p>APRIL Workshop (pt A & B) MAY 1. Webinar JUNE 2. Webinar 3. Webinar</p> 	<p>4. RISK MANAGEMENT, EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESPONSE</p> <p>OCTOBER Workshop (pt A & B) NOVEMBER 1. Webinar DECEMBER 2. Webinar 3. Webinar</p>

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GOALS

Gain a better understanding of Key Themes...



Key Themes

- Tension Between Collections Access and Preservation
- Mission, Collections Policy, and Preservation
- Ten Agents of Deterioration
- Nature of Objects and Preservation: Physical vs. Significance

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AGENDA

Handout



**Access and Artifact Handling
Workshop Part A Agenda**
Summit County Historical Museum, Coalville
January 6, 2022

Learning Goals for Workshop pt A:

1. Understand the meaning of collections access and its implications for preservation
2. Understand the importance of mission and collections policy for preservation
3. Understand the role of the ten agents of deterioration
4. Understand the importance of assessing and addressing significance of collections

Agenda

20:00-20:45 Begin promptly with Introductions

20:45-21:30 The Role of Museums, Intellectual Control, and Access

21:30-21:45 **BREAK**

11:45-11:50 Discussion: How/In what ways is access provided?

11:50-12:15 Access and the Ten Agents of Deterioration

Physical Factors:

- Fire
- Acid
- Water
- Light
- LURCH

12:15-12:00 **LUNCH**

1:15-1:55 Physical Agents of Deterioration

- Inspect Relative Humidity
- Inspect Temperature
- Provenance and Storage
- Procedures
- Discussion/Question/answer

1:55-2:40 Discussion/Question/answer

2:40-2:50 **BREAK**

2:50-3:05 Discussion/Reflection on activity

3:05-3:55 Introduce Significance and Statements of Significance

4:05-4:15 **BREAK**

4:15-4:35 Discussion/Reflection on activity

Utah Division of Arts & Museums | 507 E. North, Salt Lake City, UT 84102 | (801) 538-7841 | www.artsandmuseums.gov

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INTRODUCTIONS

Please share the following:

1. Your name
2. Where you work: institution, location, your role, and how long you have worked there

In the past month...

1. What was your most difficult collections challenge?
2. What was a collections triumph or "win"?



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MISSION OF MUSEUMS: big picture

Museums are expected to:

1. plan strategically and act ethically with respect to collections stewardship
2. legally, ethically, and responsibly acquire, manage and dispose of collection items as well as know what collections are in their custody, where they came from, why they have them, and their current condition and location
3. provide regular and reasonable access to, and use of, the collections in their custody



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"SIMPLY PUT"...

1. Know what stuff you have
2. Know what stuff you need
3. Know where it is
4. Take good care of it
5. Make sure someone gets some good out of it
6. Especially people you care about
7. And your neighbors



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COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

"A collections management policy addresses various aspects of the museum's collections stewardship **responsibilities.**



This policy defines the **scope** of a museum's collection and how the museum **cares for** its collections and makes them **available** to the public.



A collections management policy also explains the **roles** of the parties responsible for managing and caring for the museum's collections."

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“SIMPLY PUT”...

A bunch of related policies that address issues and problems **specific** to the collection



Enacting and enforcing a *good* Collections Management Policy (CMP) helps your museum achieve its mission



PREVENTIVE CONSERVATION In 7 Points

Handout in Drive



PREVENTIVE CONSERVATION IN YOUR CMP

8. COLLECTIONS RECORDS	
8.1 Responsibilities.....	20
8.2 Documents.....	20
8.3 Information Management Records.....	20
9. COLLECTIONS CARE	
9.1 Security.....	21
9.2 Storage.....	21
9.3 Transit.....	21
9.4 Conservation.....	21
9.5 Preservation, Restoration, and Housekeeping.....	22
9.6 Inventories.....	23
9.7 Traditional Care.....	23

Table of Contents: Collections Care Section in an example CMP



INTELLECTUAL CONTROL

the establishment and maintenance of documentation that describes and accommodates access to the informational content of collections resources



[Society of American Archivists](#)

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ACCESS

the ability to locate relevant information through the use of catalogs, indexes, finding aids, or other tools



[Society of American Archivists](#)

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ACCESS

the permission to locate and retrieve information for use (consultation or reference) within legally established restrictions of privacy, confidentiality, and security clearance



[Society of American Archivists](#)

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ACCESS

the physical processes of retrieving information from storage media [collections]



[Society of American Archivists](#)

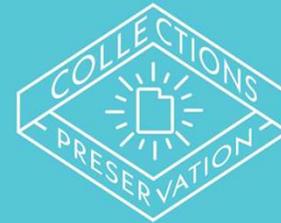
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Discussion:

According to your Mission or CMP, who has access to your collection and how?



BREAK (10 Minutes)



Discussion:

In what ways is access provided?



TEN AGENTS OF DETERIORATION

TEN AGENTS OF DETERIORATION

- 1. Physical Forces
- 2. Fire
- 3. Pests
- 4. Water
- 5. Light
- 6. Incorrect Relative Humidity
- 7. Incorrect Temperature
- 8. Thieves and Vandals
- 9. Pollution
- 10. Dissociation/Custodial Neglect



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PHYSICAL FORCES

Energetic forces that cause damage to objects due to impact, shock, vibration, pressure, and abrasion



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1. PHYSICAL FORCES



Level of damage caused by physical forces is a spectrum from **abrasion** (surface distortion due to use or repeated visitor brushing against the object, for example) to **catastrophic breakage** (example: a ceramic object falls in an earthquake and shatters). The level of damage depends on a variety of factors from object sensitivity to how much force is applied.



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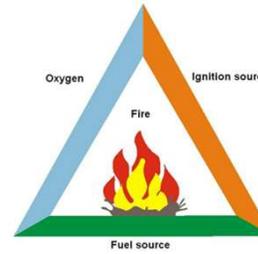
FIRE

State of combustion resulting from the reaction of a fuel source (anything that burns), oxygen, and an ignition source. Usually causes catastrophic loss, if not a complete loss; impact may include water and/or soot damage



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2. FIRE



Fire is the state of **combustion** resulting from a chemical reaction that requires the presence of three elements in proper combination — a **fuel source** (anything that burns), **oxygen** (a component of air), and an **ignition source** such as heat or a spark — in order to begin and develop. Putting out a fire involves removing one of these elements. (Canadian Conservation Institute)



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2. FIRE



Fire at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, 2019 ²⁷



2. FIRE



Examples of permanent damage due to fire (CCI)



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PESTS

living organisms that are able to disfigure, damage, and destroy material culture. Pests include rodents, insects, mold, mildew, fungi and even plants in certain contexts. Most damage is caused by species that feed on either the object materials or dust that has collected on the object

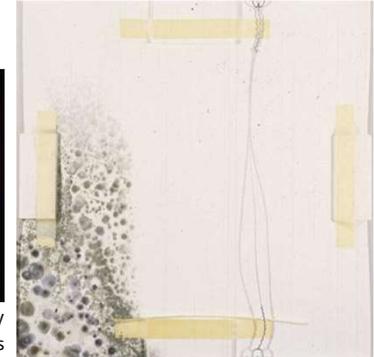


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3. PESTS



Wooden object internally damaged by insects

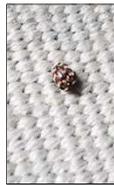


Mold growth on the back of a paper

(Images courtesy of Canadian Conservation Institute) object



3. PESTS



CARPET BEETLE LIFE CYCLE



Carpet beetle larvae found feeding on the underside of a wool rug



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WATER

Excessive moisture typically resulting from natural occurrences, technological hazards, or mechanical failures. The majority of water-related problems in cultural institutions are the result of accidents or neglect.



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4. WATER

Natural

- Rainstorm
- Windstorm
- Hurricane
- Sleet, hail, ice storm
- Flash flood
- Slow rising flood
- Tsunami (if located in a coastal seismic zone)
- Spring melt or run off
- Ice jam
- High water table
- Located by or close to a body of water (river, lake, or dam)



Sources of water damage to collections (Canadian Conservation Institute), [link to resource available in Drive](#) 33

4. WATER

Technological/Mechanical

- Sewer failure/back-up
- Sprinkler system malfunction
- Broken water line (may be caused by freezing or construction)
- Leaking roof
- Leak from heating system, ventilation system, or air conditioning system (HVAC)
- Overflowing sinks, toilets, drains (that may be blocked or unable to cope)
- Blocked eavestroughs
- Careless use of water during special events, social functions, etc.
- Use of water during construction and renovations
- Poorly/improperly insulated building
- Storm drains/sewers (that are unable to cope)



Sources of water damage to collections (Canadian Conservation Institute), [link to resource available in Drive](#) 34

4. WATER

Accidents

- Water used in cleaning up chemical spills
- Water damage due to fire (sprinkler system discharge or/and fire)



Sources of water damage to collections (Canadian Conservation Institute), [link to resource available in Drive](#) 35

4. WATER



Water damage to furniture and wooden objects after a flood at the Cumberland Heritage Museum in Ottawa (Canadian Conservation Institute) 36

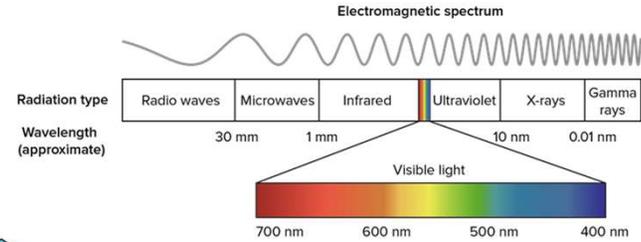
LIGHT

Visible and Ultraviolet (UV) light energy wavelengths that cause cumulative and irreversible damage to objects. Sources include both artificial lighting and sunlight



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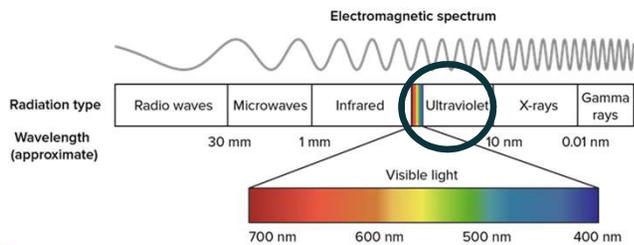
5. LIGHT



Light energy on the greater electromagnetic spectrum

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5. LIGHT



Light energy on the greater electromagnetic spectrum

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No sensitivity	Low sensitivity	Medium sensitivity	High sensitivity
<p>Materials that do not change colour due to light. (These materials may change colour due to ageing or pollutants.)</p> <p>Most but not all mineral pigments.</p> <p>The "true fresco" palette, a coincidence with the need for stability in alkali. The colours of true glass enamels, ceramics (not to be confused with enamel paints).</p> <p>Many monochrome images on paper, such as carbon inks, but the tint of the paper and added tint to the carbon ink are often high sensitivity. Paper itself must be cautiously considered low sensitivity.</p> <p>Many high-quality modern pigments developed for exterior use, automobiles.</p>	<p>Materials rated ISO Blue Wool #7, #8 (and higher).</p> <p>Artists palettes classified as "permanent" (a mix of truly permanent AND low-light sensitivity paints, e.g. ASTM D4303 Category I; Winsor and Newton AA).</p> <p>A few historic plant extracts, especially indigo on wool.</p> <p>Silver/gelatine black-and-white prints (not resin coated paper) assuming all UV blocked.</p> <p>Many high-quality modern pigments developed for exterior use, automobiles.</p> <p>Vermillion (blackens due to light).</p>	<p>Materials rated ISO Blue Wool #4, #5, or #6.</p> <p>Alizarin dyes and lakes. A few historic plant extracts, particularly madder-type reds containing primarily alizarin, as a dye on wool or as a lake pigment in all media. It varies throughout the range of medium and can reach into the low category, depending on concentration, substrate, and mordant.</p> <p>The colour of most furs and feathers.</p> <p>Most colour photographs with "chrome" in the name, e.g. Cibachrome, Kodachrome.</p>	<p>Materials rated ISO Blue Wool #1, #2, or #3.</p> <p>Most plant extracts, hence most historic bright dyes and lake pigments in all media: yellows, oranges, greens, purples, many reds, blues.</p> <p>Insect extracts, such as lac dye and cochineal (e.g. carmine) in all media.</p> <p>Most early synthetic colours such as the anilines, all media.</p> <p>Many cheap synthetic colourants in all media.</p> <p>Most felt tip pens including blacks.</p> <p>Most red and blue ballpoint inks.</p> <p>Most dyes used for tinting paper in the 20th century.</p> <p>Most colour photographs with "colour" (or "color") in the name. e.g. Kodacolor, Fujicolor.</p>

Light Sensitivity Table from Canadian Conservation Institute. (Full resource linked in Drive)

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No sensitivity	Low sensitivity	Medium sensitivity	High sensitivity
<p>Materials that do not change colour due to light. (These materials may change colour due to ageing or pollutants.)</p> <p>Most but not all mineral pigments.</p> <p>The "true fresco" palette, a coincidence with the need for stability in alkali. The colours of true glass enamels, ceramics (not to be confused with enamel paints).</p> <p>Many monochrome images on paper, such as carbon links, but the tint of the paper and added tint to the carbon ink are often high sensitivity. Paper itself must be cautiously considered low sensitivity.</p> <p>Many high-quality modern pigments developed for exterior use, automobiles.</p>	<p>Materials rated ISO Blue Wool #7, #8 (and higher).</p> <p>Artists palettes classified as "permanent" (a mix of truly permanent AND low-light sensitivity paints, e.g. ASTM D4303 Category I; Winsor and Newton AA).</p> <p>Structural colours in insects (if UV blocked).</p> <p>A few historic plant extracts, especially indigo on wool.</p> <p>Silver/gelatine black-and-white prints (not resin coated paper) assuming all UV blocked.</p> <p>Many high-quality modern pigments developed for exterior use, automobiles.</p> <p>Vermillion (blackens due to light).</p>	<p>Materials rated ISO Blue Wool #4, #5, or #6.</p> <p>Alizarin dyes and lakes. A few historic plant extracts, particularly madder-type reds containing primarily alizarin, as a dye on wool or as a lake pigment in all media. It varies throughout the range of medium and can reach into the low category, depending on concentration, substrate, and mordant.</p> <p>The colour of most furs and feathers.</p> <p>Most colour photographs with "chrome" in the name, e.g. Cibachrome, Kodachrome.</p>	<p>Materials rated ISO Blue Wool #1, #2, or #3.</p> <p>Most plant extracts, hence most historic bright dyes and lake pigments in all media: yellows, oranges, greens, purples, many reds, blues.</p> <p>Insect extracts, such as lac dye and cochineal (e.g. carmine) in all media.</p> <p>Most early synthetic colours such as the anilines, all media.</p> <p>Many cheap synthetic colourants in all media.</p> <p>Most felt tip pens including blacks.</p> <p>Most red and blue ballpoint inks.</p> <p>Most dyes used for tinting paper in the 20th century.</p> <p>Most colour photographs with "colour" (or "color") in the name, e.g. Kodacolor, Fujicolor.</p>

Light Sensitivity Table from Canadian Conservation Institute. (Full resource linked in Drive)

HOW DO WE MEASURE Light?

The exposure of an artifact to light is a product of illumination level and time:
Light level (lux) x Time (hours) = Exposure (lux hours)

Visible light is measured in **lux** or footcandles. One footcandle (fc) is equivalent to approximately 11 lux.

Ultraviolet is measured in **microwatts per lumen** ($\mu\text{W}/\text{lm}$), which describes the fraction of ultraviolet radiation in visible light. Because it is a ratio, the total UV will increase as the light levels increase, even as the ratio remains constant.




Lunch (45 Minutes)



INCORRECT RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Relative humidity is the percentage of water vapor in the air out of complete saturation (saturation= 100% Relative Humidity). Four key types of potentially incorrect RH: damp (>75%), RH outside a critical value for an object, and RH fluctuations.



6. INCORRECT RELATIVE HUMIDITY RISKS



Carriage experiencing mold growth and corrosion due to damp storage conditions (left). Glass beads crizzling due to RH above critical RH (right) -Canadian Conservation Institute

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HOW DO WE MEASURE Relative Humidity?



Hygrothermograph (old school)



Humidity Indicator Card



Analog hygrometer



Digital hygrometer/data logger



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INCORRECT TEMPERATURE

Temperature that is too high, too low, or fluctuates too frequently and causes chemical, physical and biological damage to collections.



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7. INCORRECT TEMPERATURE RISKS



Both of these objects require colder temperatures than "human comfort" for optimal preservation. Their deterioration is the result of storage in incorrect temperature. Images from the Canadian Conservation Institute ⁴⁸

HOW DO WE MEASURE Temperature?



Basic glass thermometer



Digital thermometer/data logger



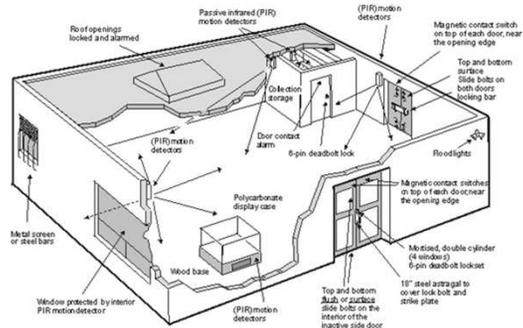
THIEVES AND VANDALS

Willful damage to collections by vandalism and removal of collections due to theft.



8. THIEVES AND VANDALS AND SECURITY

Security parameters within a small museum, Canadian Conservation Institute



POLLUTANTS

Gaseous, aerosol, liquid or solid substances that are known to have adverse effects when in contact with objects.



9. POLLUTANT RISKS



Cellulose nitrate comb deterioration



Staining of paper from deteriorating rubber



Images from the Canadian Conservation Institute 53

HOW DO WE MEASURE Pollutants?

...not that easily

Pollutants	Nature	Effects
Airborne pollutants	<p>Atmospheric sources: ozone, hydrogen sulfide, carbonyl sulfide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, and particles (e.g. soot, salts).</p> <p>From emissive products, objects and people: sulfur-based gases, organic acids (e.g. carboxylic acids), particles (e.g. lint, danders).</p>	<p>Acidification of papers, corrosion of metals, discoloration of colorants, efflorescence of calcium-based objects with RH (e.g. seashells), loss of strength for textiles. Dust: disfiguration of objects; attractant for pests, scratching of soft surfaces by friction.</p>
Pollutants transferred by contact	<p>Plasticizer from flexible PVC (polyvinyl chloride), sulfur compounds from natural rubber, staining materials from wood (especially knots), viscous compounds from old polyurethane foams, paper clips on papers, adhesives on objects from previous presentation, oily materials from leather, acids from some mineral specimens, fatty acids from people or from greasy objects such as skin/leather. Impregnation of salts during burial or immersion in seawater. Impregnation of residue of cleaning agents. Impregnation of salt from brick or stone floors or foundation.</p>	<p>Discoloration or corrosion of surface of the object in contact with harmful material from products or objects.</p>
Intrinsic pollutants	<p>Composite objects having compounds harmful for the other parts of the object, such as alum or iron gall ink in papers, 'original' adhesive tape on papers, corrosion of copper in contact with leather (e.g. tanned leather object having copper parts), composite objects made of sulfur-based compounds and metals.</p> <p>Secondary pollutants such as acetic acid and nitrogen oxide compounds from the hydrolysis of cellulose acetate and cellulose nitrate respectively.</p>	<p>Deterioration of the objects: acidification, discoloration or stain on objects.</p> <p>Secondary pollutant may speed up the degradation processes caused by oxygen, water vapour or other pollutants.</p>

Table 1. Effects of pollutants on objects. Canadian Conservation Institute. (Full resource linked in Drive)

DISSOCIATION/CUSTODIAL NEGLIGENCE

Natural tendency for ordered systems to fall apart over time, causing loss of objects, or object-related data, or the ability to retrieve or associate objects and data.



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10. DISSOCIATION/CUSTODIAL NEGLIGENCE



Example of a set of objects in a natural history collection-storage can prevent dissociation but it should not be the only defense.
Image from Spacesaver Corporation

Two photographs showing the same object. First picture appears to be object number 18901, second picture appears to be object 10681. Photo by G. Fitzgerald. © Canadian Museum of Nature

Examples and images from the Canadian Conservation Institute 56

10. DISSOCIATION/CUSTODIAL NEGLECT




Three legged horse specimen reunited with its fourth, white leg. Photograph by Laura Smyk. © Canadian Museum of Nature



Examples and images from the Canadian Conservation Institute 57

As collections stewards, we are in a constant balancing act...



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Discussion:

What tension exists between providing access and preventing agents of deterioration? Can you share an example?



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ACTIVITY 1:

Identifying agents of deterioration within the galleries

Walking through the Summit County Historical Museum galleries, identify objects and potential sources of damage that correspond to each of the ten agents of deterioration (45 min)

Handout



Workshop Part 1 January 6, 2022
Summit County Historical Museum, Coalville
access and exhibit handling

Walking through the Summit County Historical Museum galleries, identify objects and potential sources of damage that correspond to each of the ten agents of deterioration (45 min)

Object	Agent of Deterioration	Source/Damage
	Physical Forces	
	Fire	
	Pests	
	Water	
	Light	
	Incorrect Relative Humidity	
	Incorrect Temperature	
	Thieves and Vandals	

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ACTIVITY 1: Identifying Agents Discussion

- What was easy or hard about this exercise?
- Were there any surprises?
- What tension did you identify between collections access and preservation?

(15 min)



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BREAK (10 Minutes)



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SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT & STATEMENTS

Megan van Frank | Utah Humanities

SIGNIFICANCE

- Includes all facets of an object that contribute to the story that the object tells. It is when the history, uses, social and spiritual values of an object are known that the object gains meaning.
- Means the importance of an object to a particular museum or collection may vary depending on the mission statement and policies of the museum.
- Is not fixed in time but may alter with changes in communities, culture, politics, science and the environment.

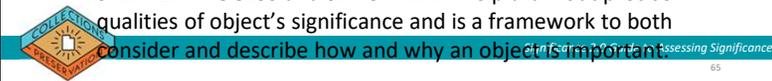


Western Australian Museum based on *Significance 2.0 Guide to Assessing Significance*

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SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

- **Collaborative process** that draws on the knowledge, skills and experience of a range of people, including donors and people in the community knowledgeable about the subject or object.
- **Consult widely** to fully understand the context, history, and significance of the object, and **research** more info where relevant.
- **STEPPED PROCESS** and **SET CRITERIA** help draw out precise qualities of object's significance and is a framework to both **consider and describe how and why an object is important.**



STEPPED PROCESS

- 1) Analyze an object or collection
- 2) Research its history, provenance, and context
- 3) Compare to similar items (in your collection or in other collections)
- 4) Understand its value by reference to **set criteria**
- 5) Summarize its meanings and values in a statement of significance



SET CRITERIA | PRIMARY

HISTORIC Objects with proven association with a known individual, event, or period in history that is considered by the museum as significant	ARTISTIC or AESTHETIC Objects considered significant for their beauty; patina of age; craftsmanship; style; design; technical accomplishment	SCIENTIFIC or RESEARCH Items of current scientific value or research potential such as archives, natural history or archaeological collections	SOCIAL or SPIRITUAL Objects held in community esteem for their cultural or social associations
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SET CRITERIA | COMPARATIVE

PROVENANCE Well documented chain of ownership and context of use from the objects' origin until it is acquired by the museum.	REPRESENTATIVE or RARE Represent category, activity, way of life or theme relevant to museum - OR - Unique, singular, or uncommon in some way relevant to museum mission	CONDITION or COMPLETENESS Objects that may be complete or intact, still working, or in original, unrestored condition	INTERPRETIVE CAPACITY Ability to interpret and demonstrate particular themes, people or ideas relative to the museum's mission
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A clearly written summary of the key components of importance and meaning of an object or collection.

- Results from the stepped assessment process using framework.
 - More than a catalog record or physical description.
 - Reasoned argument about how and why an object is of value.
- Not set in stone and may change over time with changing values.



EXAMPLE



Single Item: Illustration steps-by-step process
Collage tree hat, c. 1900
Western Australian Museum, Wellington, NSW

1. Capture a file with all the information about the item and its history
 The record acquisition date is not known. However, the Society has detailed notes. The record acquisition date is not known. However, the Society has detailed notes. The record acquisition date is not known. However, the Society has detailed notes.

2. Research the history and provenance of the item
 The Society is well associated with the hat since personally written in the book it was displayed from information supplied by the donor. These notes include information about the hat's origin in Australia, their name and work. They report the hat's origin in Australia, their name and work. They report the hat's origin in Australia, their name and work.

3. Consult donors, owners, and knowledgeable people
 The Society is well associated with the hat since personally written in the book it was displayed from information supplied by the donor. These notes include information about the hat's origin in Australia, their name and work. They report the hat's origin in Australia, their name and work.

4. Explore the context of the item
 Collage trees were a prominent feature of the streets of the in the Australian bush in the nineteenth century. First recorded in 1790, the hats were seen by travellers, artists, poets, explorers, soldiers and the rest of the world. They are depicted in the works of artists such as Henry Lawson and Mary Gilmore, and in numerous paintings and photographs of daily life in the bush and in the bush, later in the twentieth century, the terms of Sydney Rhodes were also marked by their collage tree hats and the 'collage tree' motif.

5. Analyse and describe the fabric and condition of the item
 The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band. The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band. The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band.

6. Compare the item with similar items
 The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band. The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band. The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band.

7. Identify related pieces and items
 The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band. The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band. The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band.

8. Assess significance against the criteria
 The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band. The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band. The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band.

9. Write a statement of significance
 The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band. The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band. The hat is made of woven straw with a dark band.





WHY ASSESS SIGNIFICANCE?

Assessing significance determines decisions regarding interpretation, conservation, and can provide well-reasoned arguments for declining a donation or deaccessioning an object.

- Allows better understanding and communication of an object's meaning
- Enhances access to and use of collections
- Ensures provenance and associations are fully recorded
- Provides a reference point for making conservation and collection management decisions



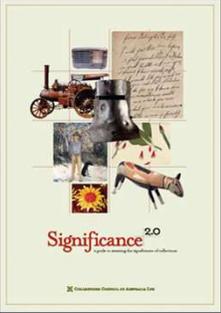
ACCESS, HANDLING, AND SIGNIFICANCE

We preserve and manage collections with a finite number of resources... SIGNIFICANCE helps us allocate resources and make difficult decisions when it comes to preservation goals.

“Significance is a process that helps collecting organisations make **good decisions** about the sustainable development, care and management of their collections.”



RESOURCES



Collections Council of Australia, *Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections* (2009)



UK Collections Trust, *Reviewing Significance 3.0* (2018)

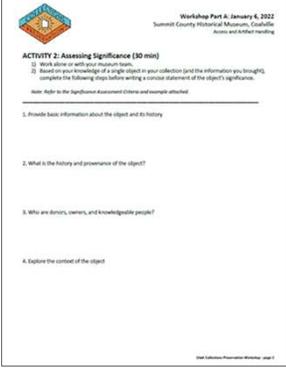


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**ACTIVITY 2:
Assessing Significance**

- 1) Work alone or with your museum team.
- 2) Based on your knowledge of a single object in your collection (and the information you brought), complete the following steps before writing a concise statement of the object's significance.

(30 min)
Handout



Workshop Part A, January 4, 2022
Summit County Historical Museum, Coalville
Access and Value meeting

ACTIVITY 2: Assessing Significance (30 min)

- 1) Work alone or with your museum team.
- 2) Based on your knowledge of a single object in your collection (and the information you brought), complete the following steps before writing a concise statement of the object's significance.

Note: Refer to the Significance Assessment Criteria and example attached.

1. Provide basic information about the object and its history.
2. What is the history and provenance of the object?
3. Who are donors, owners, and knowledgeable people?
4. Explore the context of the object.



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ACTIVITY 2: Assessing Significance Discussion

- What was easy or hard about this exercise?
- Were there any surprises?
- How does this work connect with the themes we've been discussing today >>> collections access and preservation?
- What strategies could you use to actually DO this type of work at your museum?

(20 min)



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SUMMARY

- Mission and **Collections Policy** guide preservation
- The **ten agents of deterioration** summarize environmental impacts on the collections we steward and seek to use and preserve
- Tension exists between collections **access and preservation**, and it is important for us to be intentional about our institution's balance
- Identifying and fully understanding the **significance** of our collections is a key step to planning and achieving preservation



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Wrap-Up

- Reflections from the day
- Evaluation
- Homework

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Homework

Handout



Workshop Part I: January 6, 2022
Summit County Historical Museum, Coalville
Access and Artifact Handling

Within your own collection, identify objects and potential sources of damage that correspond to each of the ten agents of deterioration. In the access column, note how access to the object is provided, noting any relationship between accessibility and sources of damage.

Object	Agent of Deterioration	Source/Damage	Access
	Physical Forces		
	Fire		

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Thank you!

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