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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

ICOM-CC 16th Triennial Conference
Our Working Group’s session promises to be great, starting off with the following talks offered during a joint session with the Textile Working Group on Thursday, Sept. 22:
• The role of conservation in increasing awareness of Jamaican lacebark, by E. Brennan.
• Investigation of non-aqueous remedial treatments for iron-tannate dyed textiles, by H. Wilson, P. Cruickshank, M. Hacke, R. Stacey, C. Carr, V. Daniels, and M. Rigout.
• The preservation of Māori textiles: collaboration, research and cultural meaning, by C. Smith, K. Te Kanawa, and M. White.
• Lighting guidelines and the lightfastness of Australian indigenous objects at the National Museum of Australia, by B. Ford, and N. Smith.
This will be followed by our own two sessions with the following talks and posters:
• Identification of animal species in skin clothing from museum collections, by A.L.
• Schmidt, M.T.P. Gilbert, E. Cappellini, and J.V. Olsen.
• Joining broken wax fragments: testing tensile strength of adhesives for fragile and non-polar substrates, by A. Fischer, and M. Eska.
• Sharing knowledge, by F. Fekrsanati, G. Scott, M. Reuss, and R. Sulistianingsih.
• Taking the ancestors on a visit: the role of conservators in reconnecting a collection of historic Blackfoot shirts with the community, by H. Richardson.
• A collaborative study of Native California featherwork, by E. Pearlstein, R. Riedler, M. Gleeson, J. Druzik, and C. Pesme.
• (Poster) The conservation of an early gut skin sail from the Hudson Strait, by K. Jackson, and H. Richardson.
• (Poster) The conservation of a Tahitian mourner’s costume, by J. Uden, and H. Richardson.

We also will have our Business Meeting, during which time there will be elections of a new Coordinator and a Special Session on the Name Change Proposal.

Working Group Name Change Proposal
Since the dissemination of the Discussion Paper in April 2011, a consultation was carried out in June-July using the online SurveyMonkey. All Working Group members, as well as a broader readership (ethnographic conservation listserv members), were asked individually whether they thought the name of this Working Group should change, and to rate and rank potential substitute names. A two third majority indeed voted to change the Working Group name; however no single substitute name gathered a
clear consensus. The full results and analysis of this consultation are published below. We shall discuss the consultation results and our next steps in Lisbon, and report back to the membership so that those who cannot attend the conference will be informed. As well, we continue to welcome your input by email or online using the ICOM-CC Forum. Although I am stepping down as Coordinator, I will be happy to assist others who will be working to achieve a satisfactory outcome for this important issue.

Thank you!
These six years have been most rewarding! It has been a pleasure working with all of you! Carole Dignard

NAME CHANGE SURVEY RESULTS

ICOM-CC Working Group on Ethnographic Collections: Name Change Consultation Results and Analysis

Part 1: Background & Introduction to Survey

Keynote speaker Tharron Bloomfield, a Maori conservator at the National Library of New Zealand, expressed the following during his talk at the 2008 ICOM-CC Conference: “The term ‘ethnographic’ conservator is at best old fashioned and inadequate, and at worst offensive and racist. The word ethnographic suggests it is the culture of ‘them rather than us’, it also makes a judgment that one culture is superior to another. Why are the clothing, weaponry and tools of my ancestors described as ethnographic, while the clothing, weaponry and tools of someone from a European culture not? It is time for conservators who work with cultural material to find another, more appropriate name for the material they work with.”

Bloomfield was not alone. During the Working Group’s Business Meeting it was decided to investigate whether the name of the Working Group (WG) was appropriate, or whether it should be changed. A Name Change Committee was formed and volunteers invited, and discussions through various electronic means have ensued with regular updates in the Newsletter. The discussions were recorded as a reference and made available to the membership (by contacting the Coordinator), and were used to produce, in April, 2011, a Discussion Paper summarizing the issues at hand (available at: http://www.icom-cc.org/54/document/discussion-paper-on-the-name-change-of-the-working-group-ethnographic-collections/?id=969). Subsequently, further membership comments were posted on the ICOM-CC Forum (at: http://www.icom-cc.org/forums/viewforum.php?f=7&sid=).

At that point, it was felt it would be useful to carry out a consultation to gauge each interested individual’s view on whether the name of this Working Group should be changed, and if so, which alternative name might be appropriate. This was carried out as an informal survey using the SurveyMonkey freeware system, between June 15 and July 5th 2011. Given the complexity of the topic and because circumstances do not permit the execution of a fair, representative or statistically-valid “vote”, the survey was developed as a consultative tool to identify opinion trends on this issue, rather than to impose any binding or definitive “vote” result.

The results of this consultation are presented below. They will assist the WG Coordinator and Name Change Committee in formulating a plan of action for the next steps. Members and survey participants will be kept informed at each significant stage of the Name Change Proposal. According to ICOM-CC protocol, the ultimate decision on whether the Name of the Working Group will change, rests with the elected ICOM-CC Directory Board, after considering the advice from the WG Coordinator, who must justify the request, and explain how members were consulted.

Part 2: Survey Pool, Questions and Results

Individuals who were consulted, between June 15th and July 5th 2011:
• 84 current ICOM-CC WG members (M)
• 193 non-members (NM) i.e. current ethnographic conservation listserv participants (other than ICOM-CC WG members)

Number of Individuals who answered the questionnaire (the response rate):
• 33 WG Members or 39% of the membership
• 43 non-members = 22% of those consulted
• Total response rate (M + NM) = 27%
Question 1.
Should the ICOM-CC Working Group on Ethnographic Collections change its name?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Non-Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>23 (70%)</td>
<td>29 (68%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided/No opinion</td>
<td>5 (15%)</td>
<td>9 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped this question</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Responses</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: % indicates the % of votes per total responses

Comments: ICOM-CC Members
1. To me ‘Ethnography’ is not a word with immanent negative connotations. It is a - meanwhile historic - name for the study and analysis of peoples all over the world. The methods of analysis and the social background have always changed with time and with each acting person. What the discussion is all about is being respectful of peoples who are different from ourselves. I’ve never met a conservator in this field of conservation who was not - fortunately. The important point is to advance a respectful and tolerant attitude where we feel a lack of it. Changing the name of our working group is, in my opinion, not a significant contribution to this aim.

2. I feel that ethnographic collections are a part of objects that were and are created by native/indigenous/aboriginal/local cultures. If a conservator works with objects collected during a study then they can be called an Ethnographic conservator but outside of that the term is not correct. I tend to explain my work as a conservator of aboriginal objects, but I see the need for something that is broader to include the work of local cultures where consultation is desired/required.

3. Yes. I think it’s important that the name not be too restrictive, so it can encompass emerging research and ‘participatory conservation’ and consultation with multiple groups/stakeholders. ‘Ethnographic’ can refer to social history or ‘historical’ material, which is other than indigenous in nature (defined as per ‘anthropology’).

4. As reflected in the discussions leading up to this survey, it is not a simple task to find an alternative name that would reflect all the aspects and the core of the working groups work.

5. With great interest I have followed the discussion on the name change. I see arguments for keeping the name that we have as it implies the history of how the collections have been formed. The argument for why I think the name should be changed is that I believe we now deal with more aspects of cultures than purely the material aspect, but also the intangible. Therefore, I think names that include the approaches now taken by involving source communities and broader cultural aspects would suit our working group best. I also believe that these aspects differentiate us most from other WGs.

6. The definition of ‘Ethnology’ is “Science of races and their relations to one another and characteristics” (The Concise Oxford Dictionary). It includes all races. It’s unfortunate that it has acquired a pejorative meaning to some but given another decade or so we may well find that this definition is still the best and most of the negative connotations will be forgotten.

7. It seems clear that there is a desire to change the name amongst the membership of the working group, and it basically seems a bit silly for a working group to have a name that members of that group don’t want to work under.

8. Unfortunately, there doesn’t seem to be any other name, which is appropriate and comprehensive for our group without being incredibly convoluted or wordy (and ultimately more confusing). The fact that the current name is offensive for some members, however, makes me lean towards a name change, which while not totally adequate, might be more acceptable to both the majority of the members and hopefully to the originators of the collections that we work on.

9. I suppose given the context of the opening premise, then yes.

10. (Comments) As submitted previously in support of name change.

Comments: Non-Members (Listserv participants)
1. New times - New name.

2. I am leaning toward the no vote, because in my experience ‘ethnographic’ is a word that encompasses a wide variety of artifacts from European and Asian peoples as well as the Americas, Africa and the Pacific. Artifacts from my ‘low’ (class) European ancestors are called ethnographic and I am ok with that. I wouldn’t call my ancestors ‘indigenous’ as they likely
supplanted some earlier souls by quickly dispatching them in a barbaric manner. And a later group did the same to my ancestors, subjugating them. Warfare, slavery and other sorts of injustices have always been with us, a name change won't change that fact. To my ear, much of the conversation is very loud and strident on the part of those lobbying for a name change. I don't think the entirety of the things we call ethnographic belongs to that group. I can't help but feel that the name change is a way of controlling others, just as the name change group says they are being controlled.

3. A change in it's name would reflect not only the dynamic nature of our conservation profession and the context in which it exists, but also that of how society is evolving.

4. Many good and logical arguments have been made from differing perspectives in our discussion on the name change. For me a fundamental basis point is in a different dimension: the emotions/reactions of feeling/whatever you want to call it. We just don't want a name that alienates people -present or future-whatever side we support as to the meaning of ‘ethnographic’ or the best name for the group.

5. There are a large enough number of people who feel that the name should be changed, that there will continue to be unrest until there is a change.

6. I definitely don't want to cause offense to any indigenous groups by the use of the term 'ethnographic', but in our lab 'ethnographic' doesn't mean 'indigenous', it includes materials from all communities that is culturally important and not a sculpture, painting, textile, work on paper or piece of furniture. In fact, most of it is not from indigenous groups.

7. I don't consider the term 'ethnographic’ to be racist or derogatory, but obviously many conservators do. So I am ambivalent to a name change.

8. As expressed by persons of various backgrounds, ‘ethnographic’ is a loaded term with connotations that draw a line of ‘us’ and ‘them’. We recognize that these connotations derive from early usages of the term; a time when this division was believed to be important and acceptable. Society and our own profession are working to erase that line, as it is no longer relevant or acceptable to perceive such boundaries. A term to replace ‘ethnographic’ should reflect the full variability of culture and exchange between cultural groups.

9. ‘Ethnographic’ seems to be perceived negatively, though I find that its literal meaning of describing a way of life is reasonable. ‘Indigenous’ complies with the UN Declaration. ‘Collections’ are what we work on, so I propose that this be retained.

10. I do not agree that the term ‘ethnographic’ is offensive or old fashioned. Ethnography is a historical science that studies ethnic groups and their material and spiritual culture; in my opinion the term itself is not judgmental.

11. After reading the dialogue over the past weeks and talking with colleagues, it is my opinion that the reasoning behind the existence of the Ethnographic Working Group should be examined. I do not think that the approach taken in the conservation of ‘ethnographic’ collections to be unique to them. For example, consultation and collaboration is critical when working with contemporary art, military, religious collections etc. and objects, which still have a ‘working life’ are found in engineering collections etc. All objects require the same judgment and ethics to be applied to their conservation; the same consideration to their context and role in society; the same consultation and involvement of stakeholders. Thus, a more inclusive forum to discuss this seems to be what is necessary -- perhaps the Group should morph into an Ethics Working Group or perhaps the existing Theory and History of Conservation Group already covers this or should be expanded to do so? For those discussions which primarily revolve around the complexity of conserving objects with a variety of materials in them, perhaps a Working Group for Composite Artifacts should be created or discussions of this nature should be hosted by the existing Working Group which forms the main substrate for the object(s) (e.g. leather, wood etc.).

**Question 2.**

The following list includes the current name (WG on ETHNOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS) plus other possible replacement names. Please rate each one.

Note: Objects/Collection means either the name with the term Objects, or the name with the term Collections (you will identify your preference between these terms in Question #4).
### Results Table for Question 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor, Unacceptable</th>
<th>Good, Acceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Indigenous Objects/Collections</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Indigenous Materials and Issues</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Indigenous and Local Materials</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Indigenous and Local Cultural Material</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Indigenous Issues and Cultures</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Source Communities</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Objects/Collections from Source Communities</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Cultural History Collections</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Social History Collections</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG for the Material History of World Cultures</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Objects of Collections from World Cultures</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Objects of Collections from World Civilizations</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Objects/Collections of Cultural Value</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Objects/Collections of Cultural Heritage</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Cultural Objects/Collections</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Material Culture</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Cultural Materials</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Cultural Materials and Participatory Conservation</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Living Cultures and Material Culture</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG for Living Cultures and Cultural Material</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Organic Materials</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Objects</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Anthropological Objects/ Collections</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG of Anthropology Conservators</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG of Ethnographic Conservators</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Ethnographic Conservation</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WG on Ethnographic Collections (CURRENT NAME)</strong></td>
<td>![Green Bar]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Suggestions for WG Names:

- WG on Indigenous and Social History Collections
- WG on Social History and Indigenous Material Culture
- WG on Social History and Indigenous Collections
- WG on Indigenous and Social History Material Culture
- WG on Indigenous Cultural Materials
- WG on Indigenous Materials
- WG on Indigenous Objects/ Collections and Cultural Materials
- WG on Materials and Collections from Indigenous Cultures
- WG with Cultures of Indigenous Peoples
- WG on Arts Premiers Collections

Comments: ICOM-CC Members
1. Conservators are not specialized/qualified in ‘Indigenous Issues’. Using ‘living’ cultures would eliminate many historical collections, which are at the same time not archaeological. e.g. the Beothuk in Newfoundland and Labrador (the same applies to the use of ‘historical’ - too limiting). WG for the Material ‘History’ of World Cultures - could be ‘heritage’, but not ‘history’. ‘Source communities’ becomes complicated when trying to decide integrated or multicultural influences; this is one reason why I prefer ‘cultures’ to ‘communities’. Communities can be interpreted as ‘places’.
2. I like participatory as a concept but it is not unique to this group. Living artists are often consulted regarding paintings, sculpture... Religious groups are consulted - perhaps they are considered as part of our group but it could influence textiles, metals etc. Conservation is becoming more and more inclusive so ‘participatory’ should be assumed or hopefully will soon be assumed.
3. Other names to consider:
   - WG on Indigenous and Social History Collections (my 1st choice)
   - WG on Social History and Indigenous Material Culture (2nd choice)
   - WG on Social History and Indigenous Collections (3rd choice)
   - WG on Indigenous and Social History Material Culture (4th choice)
4. With most of the names suggested there is an issue with either being too specific or non-specific. There is not a good fit, at the most there are acceptable names.
5. I absolutely loathe the suggestion ‘WG on Objects’. It works in other organizations but it totally misses the point of this WG and the ICOM-CC context. It is vague and evasive.
6. The poor/acceptable boundary indicates names I prefer over names I don't much like. However, the names in the unacceptable indicate names under which I would have to reconsider membership of the working group as they simply don't reflect what I see as the point of being in the working group.
7. Other name to consider: WG on Indigenous Cultural Materials

Comments: Non-Members (Listserv participants)
1. Other potential name: WG on Arts Premiers Collections - The term ‘Premiers’, in this case, should be understood in the sense of the earliest forms of artistic expression.
2. Other name suggestion: a good option could be Working Group WITH Cultures of Indigenous Peoples (Caps are my emphasis only on the change. The name is taken from one proposed by Pearlstein and others in June 16 discussions. I would like to include their use of ‘Collections’ here, except that as it reads, it becomes ‘Collections of Indigenous Peoples’). Also consider: GW instead of WG? i.e. ‘Group Working' rather than Working Group.
3. Other name suggestion: a good option could be Working Group on Indigenous Objects/ Collections and Cultural Materials.
4. Other name suggestion: WG on Indigenous Collections or WG on Indigenous Materials.
5. Other name suggestion: WG on Materials and Collections from Indigenous Cultures.

Question 3.
What are your first choices of names for this ICOM-CC Working Group?

Legend:    M = Member
           NM = Non-Members
Different weights were given to different choices. The voting weights were calculated as follows:

1st choice = 5 points
2nd choice = 4 points
3rd choice = 3 points
4th choice = 2 points
5th choice = 1 point
Results Table for Question 3.
Comments: ICOM-CC Members
1. Other name to consider: WG on World Material Culture & Heritage
2. Other name to consider: WG on Indigenous and Social History Collections
3. I think these are heading in the right direction.

Non-Members (Listserv participants)
1. Other name to consider: (my 1st choice) Working Group WITH Cultures of Indigenous Peoples
2. Other name to consider: WG on Material History of World Cultures (my 2nd choice).

Question 4.
In your preferred name choice(s), should the term ‘Objects’ or ‘Collections’ be used?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Non-Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objects</td>
<td>8 (24%)</td>
<td>10 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collections</td>
<td>16 (48.5%)</td>
<td>17 (39.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Either / No opinion</td>
<td>6 (18%)</td>
<td>11 (25.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>3 (9%)</td>
<td>3 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped this question</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: % indicates the % of votes per total responses

Comments: ICOM-CC Members
1. I chose ‘objects’ where relevant to specific name choices simply because one can conceive of several objects as a collection but, by definition, a collection is seldom if ever a collection. Also, ‘collections’ is a term commonly used in museums, but conservators in private practice, or owners, may be involved with only one object, not a collection. Finally, indigenous owners rarely think of their cultural objects as ‘collections’. For all these reasons, ‘Object’ or ‘Objects’ is a more flexible and accurate term for conservation practice.
2. Need to cover intangible!
3. I miss the word ‘conservation’ in the new names because this is what we are doing (e.g. WG on Conservation of World Culture Objects).
4. ‘Collections’ is better because it implies a group of objects, but also THE object itself.
5. I’d prefer a name that uses neither, as I don’t think either is inclusive enough.
6. ‘Objects’ and ‘collections’ as terms have also been problematic for indigenous cultures who see these words as being applied to their cultural items by a dominant society.

Comments: Non-Members (Listserv participants)
1. I would propose ‘materials’ rather than ‘objects’ or ‘collections’.
2. Materials is okay too.
3. Neither.
4. Considering ‘objects’ vs ‘collections’ suggests that we are not there yet. I think we need more input from Indigenous peoples.
5. We conservators use ‘objects’ in a way that may not be interpreted in the same way by other disciplines, leading to debates about object-subject. However, as professional shorthand it has been and is useful. To say, “I am an objects conservator” has meaning within the field. ‘Collections’ also carries baggage: are ‘objects’, held by an Indigenous group that seeks advice on preservation, part of a ‘collection’ or part of ongoing life? My grandmother’s teapot is a part of my family history, but not of a collection.
6. Happy for either ‘objects’ or ‘collections’ but think it should include one or other as most of us work with objects and collections in the custody of institutions.
7. Both should be included, as emphasis is on both the individual and the collective approach.

Question 5.
Are you an ICOM member, or Friend/Student Friend of ICOM-CC?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes I am a current member</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No I am not a member</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 6.
Your comments, feedback or suggestions are appreciated. Thank you.

Comments: ICOM-CC MEMBERS:
1. To me ethnographic is not exclusively about indigenous it is about world culture from Danish sailors to Armenian tailors, from street performers to Japanese fashionistas... How long before the term indigenous will be condescending again? Ethnographic is more general.
2. Thanks for taking this matter forward Carole. You've done a good job as Coordinator of this WG.

3. Although I rated the current name as acceptable, I feel fairly strongly that it's preferable the name be changed.

4. It might be helpful to look into what other organizations, such as UNESCO, etc. have chosen as the common name or denomination and use those as a guideline, this might enable a definition within an already thought through process of renaming.

5. Thanks a lot for all the effort!

6. Thanks for all your work!

7. If no consensus is reached then I prefer to stay with the old name. Despite its pejorative connotations, the old name is evolving (as is conservation) and also carries connotations that do not have to do with colonial points of view. In any case, I think a lot has been accomplished already; discussing the main objectives of this WG was meritorious in itself. I think it “stirred the pot” quite a bit and made people think about what defines, or should define, the kind of conservation they are doing, should be doing or would like to be doing.

8. Thank you for taking on this timely task. The discussions have been very interesting.

9. As a European, it does make one think about our perceptions from the 'other' side. And that cannot be a bad thing. Thank you for making us think about it.

10. Members of this group, as I understand it, work primarily on objects and other materials like textiles or wood, and secondarily (if at all, unfortunately) with the cultures the object comes from. So, somehow, mention of the physical item ought to be in the title, as aspiring as we might be to include more in what we do. ‘Source communities’, ‘social history’ and ‘cultural history’ is not specific enough to what we do. ‘Local’ is not widely understood. Terms like ‘anthropology’ and ‘material culture’ come from the same lineage as the problematic ‘ethnographic’. Wordy long titles are annoying unless you can get an acronym going. Now that we have opened this can of worms and many eyes are upon us, the name MUST change. Otherwise it is a slap in the face to people for whom these words truly matter.

Comments: Non-Members (Listserv participants)
1. Thank you for organizing this name change process. Whatever the name that would be chosen, I will keep supporting the WG. I believe that starting to question about the impact of the term ethno on native people is a good and wise start. I think mentalities will change naturally with time like water of a river that is constantly renewed by necessity.

2. Thank you for encouraging such a robust debate Carole.

3. I do not agree that the term ‘Ethnographic Collections’ is racist; I certainly accept that we use ‘ethnographic’ to describe European artifacts: this claim stems from ignorance at best, willful misleading at worst. Judaica collections in the Israel Museum are described as Ethnographic, to give but one example of a culture referring to specific aspects of its own material culture as ethnographic. I believe this is the case for many European collections. I cannot even call this claim over sensitivity to political correctness, because I think there is no ‘incorrectness’ in the name. I simply fail to understand the claim. It seems to me, at the risk of being accused of being philistine, to be an over-indulgence in pseudo-intellectual mind games. When I look at the list above, a question comes to mind: Why is indigenous less patronizing / racist / insensitive than ethnographic? It is also appallingly inaccurate: indigenous to what? What isn't indigenous to somewhere? Isn't contemporary art indigenous to wherever it is produced? Please note, in regards to the introduction, that hardly ANYBODY refers to any Europeans as Indigenous - this term really IS mostly used in relation to minority groups that were marginalized by colonizers. And what, in the name of all that is coherent, is ‘Source Communities’? HONESTLY! Do we want to push ourselves out of understanding of any but the most esoteric jargon-addict? Collections from World Civilizations? What ISNT world civilization???? Movies are, photographs are, archaeological collections are, outdoor sculpture? yes, and so on and so forth. Cultural Value? who are we to decide what ISNT of cultural value? Cultural material and PARTICIPATORY conservation? I have a PhD and I can't fathom this one...

4. I commend Carole Dignard and any colleague who have assisted her in undertaking this survey. I commend the Working Group on Ethnographic Collections for participating in the discussion leading up to the survey. John Moses.
5. Wouldn’t any name that incorporates ‘cultural material’ or ‘material culture’ be so general that it could encompass every artifact, throughout the world and time? Although ‘ethnographic’ in its literal meaning, gives, more or less, the same result. As one of the commenters noted - whether or not a 15th century panel painting from the Low Countries is called Flemish Primitive, Early Netherlandish or Northern Renaissance makes no difference. The name neither takes away nor adds to the value of the work of those who admire and appreciate these works. It is unfortunate that this same sentiment does not hold true for works of Ethnographic, Indigenous or World cultures. For me a name does not define the value of the work. I guess that is why I am undecided, as no choice improves on the present name. But I find it discouraging that ethnographic has, to some minds, come to be viewed as a racist term. Misguided in its application, perhaps, I am unsure. But such strong wording, I find bullying and offensive. No doubt all groups have their racist tendencies. I do take seriously the UN declaration that specifies using ‘indigenous people’ when referring to certain groups and those guidelines should be followed when working on such material, but I disagree that all the artifacts the ICOM working group deals with were created by indigenous peoples. As I noted above, in many parts of the world the present ‘indigenous’ peoples have supplanted others, merging cultures (history is written/or told by the winners). It is complicated, but if a name change helps to mend hurt feelings or reduces the not so hidden anger of some, maybe that is the best way to proceed. Many thanks for providing a survey, it must have taken hours to collate the responses and produce this document.

6. I disagree with most name suggestions because they - by attempting political correctness - confuse rather than clarify the nature of my work.

7. This has been a great discussion. Many thanks to Carole Dignard.

8. This has been a fine forum to explore the various and varied views of the common work we do. Thank you to all who helped make it happen.

9. I like the names that still impart the relationship with indigenous cultures and issues. I don’t like the names that are too generic or not easily understood as meaning anything.

10. Comments related to the use of the terms: Living, this is not always the case. Participatory - obvious as member of working group. Local - to who or what? I am working in Australia so local to me would be different compared to someone in the UK? Issues - do we mean material culture or what? Objects - would not distinguish our role from the other working groups? I think that the term indigenous is the best replacement for ethnographic.

11. The name needs to be simple and not too wordy, yet cover the very many ideas and important facets as highlighted by the discussion.

12. When this discussion was started I was not aware of the implications attached to the ‘old’ name this WG had. With my current studies, though, (...) these issues have been raised. And I am very happy, I must say, that a name change will hopefully take place!

13. I feel that whatever new name is decided upon there will always be a need to explain its meaning to both our fellow conservators and museum professionals, as well as those from outside of museums. Many of the choices above are cumbersome in their wordiness and nothing seems to sum up what we are trying to express with the same succinctness as ‘ethnographic’. So while I appreciate how the use of this word is no longer appropriate and fully support the effort to find an alternative, it feels like there is more work to be done on the matter, more consultations to be had with a wider audience. Asking for the impartial contributions of both a philosopher and a linguistics expert may seem extreme, but could prove very useful to our cause.

14. After reading the dialogue over the past weeks and talking with colleagues, it is my opinion that the reasoning behind the existence of the Ethnographic Working Group should be examined. I do not think that the approach taken in the conservation of ‘ethnographic’ collections to be unique to them. For example, consultation and collaboration is critical when working with contemporary art, military, religious collections etc. and objects, which still have a ‘working life’ are found in engineering collections etc. All objects require the same judgment and ethics to be applied to their conservation; the same consideration to their context and role in society; the same
consultation and involvement of stakeholders. Thus, a more inclusive forum to discuss this seems to be what is necessary—perhaps the Group should morph into an Ethics Working Group or perhaps the existing Theory and History of Conservation Group already covers this or should be expanded to do so? For those discussions which primarily revolve around the complexity of conserving objects with a variety of materials in them, perhaps a Working Group for Composite Artifacts should be created or discussions of this nature should be hosted by the existing Working Group which forms the main substrate for the object(s) (e.g. leather, wood etc).

**Part 3: Analysis of Results**

1. There was a good participation rate for this survey: 39% of the ICOM-WG membership responded (33/84), and 22% of other interested individuals (43/193 ethnographic conservation listserv participants) responded.

2. A 2/3 majority of respondent members (70%) and non-members (68%) are in favor of changing the current name of this WG (see results of question #1). This is a clear result in favor of changing the current name of the WG. For members who responded, 15% are against the change, and 15% are undecided; for non-members, about 9% are against and 23% undecided.

3. The term ‘collections’ was generally preferred to ‘objects’, gathering twice as many votes, however it did not gather a simple majority vote (see results of question #4). The term ‘materials’ also has gathered interest and would be worth investigating further.

4. There was no consensus on a replacement name. This is probably due to the fact that votes were divided among a large number of possible alternatives. In question #2, no name gathered a simple majority of ‘Good’ votes (for responding Members this would require 17 votes; for NM the simple majority is 22 votes). Only the following two names were found to be ‘Acceptable’ or better by a simple majority of respondents:
   - **WG on Indigenous Objects/Collections** (by both M and NM)
   - **WG on Objects of/Collections from World Cultures** (by Members only).
5. The following names, or clusters of names, gathered the most favor in question #2 (with regards to ‘good’ or ‘acceptable, versus ‘poor’ or ‘unacceptable’ choices) and question #3 (first, second, third, fourth or fifth choices):

‘Indigenous’ cluster: this cluster of names clearly gathered the most favorable (‘good’ or ‘acceptable’) votes and the least ‘unacceptable’ votes.

- **WG on Indigenous Objects/Collections**
  gathered the most favor overall. In question #3, it gathered the most ‘first choices’ and its ‘score’ was the highest. In question #2 it obtained the highest number of ‘good’ votes and the fewest number ‘unacceptable’ votes.

The following related names also gathered substantial favor (high number of ‘good’ or ‘acceptable’ votes) and a good consensus (few ‘unacceptable’ votes):

- **WG on Indigenous Materials and Issues**
- **WG on Indigenous and Local Cultural Materials**.

‘World Cultures’ cluster: this is the second most favored ‘cluster’ in terms of gathering ‘good’ or ‘acceptable’ votes. It also drew a good consensus (few ‘unacceptable’ votes):

- **WG on Objects/Collections from World Cultures**
  gathered a high number of ‘good’ or ‘acceptable’ votes, and among voting Members it received a relatively high ‘score’ in question #3 (weighted sum of first/second etc choices). It was rated more favorably by Members than by non-members.

- **WG for the Material History of World Cultures**
  also gathered a significant number of ‘good’ or ‘acceptable’ votes in question #2. In question #3 this choice fared well in its total ‘score’, however with members it did notably less well than the above ‘Objects/Collections from World Cultures’ choice.

‘Living Cultures’ cluster: this is the third cluster of importance, drawing several votes in favor; however, it lacked consensus (i.e. it drew many ‘unacceptable’ votes, especially among Members).

- **WG for Living Cultures and Cultural Material** was slightly more in favor than
- **WG on Living Cultures and Material Culture**.

Other names gathered a certain interest, but generally with a lack of consensus (i.e. in general they obtained more ‘unacceptable’ votes than ‘good’ or ‘acceptable’):

- **WG on Cultural History Collections** (few found it ‘good’ but several found it ‘acceptable’)
- **WG on Cultural Materials and Participatory Conservation**
- **WG on Cultural Materials**
- **WG on Material Culture**
- **WG on Objects/Collections of Cultural Heritage**
- **WG on Anthropological Objects/Collections**

6. Names that fared poorly and should probably be omitted in future discussions, unless new information arises that would justify their continued consideration:

- **WG on Source Communities**
- **WG on Objects/Collections from Source Communities**
- **WG on Social History Collections**
- **WG on Objects/Collections of Cultural Value**
- **WG on Organic Materials**
- **WG on Objects**
- **WG on Anthropology Conservators**
- **WG on Ethnographic Conservators**

**MOST PROMISING OPTIONS TO DATE:**

- **WG on Indigenous Collections** **
- **WG on Indigenous Materials and Issues**
- **WG on Indigenous and Local Cultural Material**
- **WG for the Material History of World Cultures**
- **WG on Collections from World Cultures** *
- **WG on Cultural History Collections**
- **WG on Material Culture**
- **WG on Cultural Materials**
- **WG on Living Cultures and Material Culture**
- **WG for Living Cultures and Cultural Material**
- **WG on Anthropological Collections**
7. Several new names that were proposed should be further discussed, of which:
   • Names containing the word ‘Materials’ rather than ‘Objects’ or ‘Collections’
   • WG on Indigenous Materials
   • WG on Indigenous Cultural Materials
   • WG on Indigenous Collections and Cultural Materials
   • WG on Materials and Collections from Indigenous Cultures
   • WG on Arts Premiers Collections
   • WG on World Material Culture & Heritage
   • WG on Material History of World Cultures

8. Results from the Members and those from Non-Members are generally fairly similar, although there are some nuances. In Question #2, Members, in relative proportion to Non-members, were more decisive about some name choices, i.e. choosing the more definite values of “Good” or “Unacceptable” rather than tending toward the mid-range values of “Acceptable” or “Poor” used often by NM for the same choice. In particular, Members tended to have more pronounced views on what names they did not like, i.e. Members rated more names as being ‘Unacceptable’, as compared to Non-Members.

In Question #3, note that, if all else were equal, the ‘Scores’ for each name choice would be expected to be higher for Non-Members than for Members simply because there were more Non-Members who replied to the survey. However, in the case of a few names, the Score from Members is higher than that of Non-Members, indicating a higher interest in these names from Members than from NM, notably for:
   • WG on Indigenous and Local Cultural Material
   • WG on Objects of/ Collections from World Cultures
   • WG on Cultural Materials and Participatory Conservation
   • WG on Living Cultures and Material Culture
   • WG for Living Cultures and Cultural Material
   • WG on Anthropological Objects/Collections

Conclusion:
One of the main purposes of this survey was to offer the possibility of recording the views of all interested parties in a confidential manner so as to hear equally from those who, otherwise, may choose to be less vocal. All current members and listerv participants were sent the survey with three weeks to reply; the response rate was close to 40% for members and 22% for non-members - a response rate which is overall quite high, generally speaking, for a survey.

The survey’s most noteworthy result is that, among those who responded, a 2/3 majority of the WG membership and of listserve colleagues have spoken in favor of changing the name of this WG. I would propose that henceforth, we focus the discussion on the choice of the most appropriate replacement name.

A large number of choices for an appropriate new name were considered and rated, but the sheer number of options, each with their pros and cons, made consensus unachievable at this time. However, some clusters of name types were identified, while less appropriate names have also become evident. Next steps towards selection would include narrowing down the choices, deciding which new names should be further explored, and further examining and discussing the meanings and limitations implied by the most prominent of the potential replacement names.

Let us not fall into the facile trap of extrapolating more than what this survey can tell us. The survey was not intended as a definitive vote or an end in itself; rather, it does, as intended, indicate general trends and directions to explore further, and provides useful comments to reflect on. The results will be helpful in the work ahead towards refining choices for a new name. Views and opinions will continue to evolve as we continue to work together towards achieving a consensus. This on-going discussion continues to invite questions and comments.

Acknowledgments:
I would like to thank the membership and colleagues who have provided their enthusiastic support in moving this complicated project forward. As well, the Name Change Committee Members have been great in providing ongoing
and reliable input, comments and suggestions: Luba Nurse, Catherine Smith, Ellen Carrlee, Farideh Fekrsanati, Janet Mason, John Moses, Marian Kaminitz, Renata Peters, Sherry Doyal, Ann Howatt and Tharron Bloomfield. Finally, special thanks are extended to John Moses who has provided invaluable context, thoughtful considerations and detailed references to this discussion; and to Ann Howatt, for her detailed contributions throughout, as well as her invaluable comments and edits to the present text.

Carole Dignard,
Coordinator, August 2011

All are invited to continue the Name Change discussion on the ICOM-CC Forum located at: http://www.icom-cc.org/forums/viewforum.php?f=7&sid=700756a90a314eb556660df81f71dce0

ARTICLE

Conserving the Symbol
Presented at the 28th American Indian Workshop¹, Paris, 10-13 May 2007

Canadian Museum of Civilization entrance with Canadian Parliament Buildings in background (©CMC Photo Credit M.-L. Deruaz IMG2008-0181-0002-Dm)

¹ The aim of this paper was to present some of the ethnographic conservation practices at CMC to mostly European, non-conservation specialists. “The American Indian Workshop (AIW) started in 1980 and has become the most important scholarly platform for European researchers into issues related to the Native Peoples of North America.” : www.american-indian-workshop.org

² “In 1976, the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology in Vancouver opened. Dr. Michael Ames, now its director, says that when the totem poles were being moved out of the storage sheds and into the great hall, a raven followed them in, cawing. It was a pivotal time; he and others stopped thinking of museums as places to house relics of dying cultures and began to understand them as places which could celebrate the continuity of living cultures and their traditional arts”. Doreen Jensen, in Steltzer, 1994

³ This exhibition took place during the 1988 Calgary Olympics.

Abstract
At the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the conservation of North American First Nations, Métis and Inuit objects is done with respect for indigenous beliefs and in constant dialogue with curators, who, in consultation with First Nations communities, serve as a voice for transmitting Native culture. Based on examples from recent exhibitions and specific care of objects, the author demonstrates how this respect is translated into present day conservation practices, acknowledging the limitations and the implications of these practices.

Introduction
The growth of museums in Europe and North America in the 19th and early 20th centuries reflects the development of science and the effects of colonialism. It was during this period that we also saw the assemblage of large archaeological and ethnographic collections. These collections displayed objects as scientific specimens illustrating and explaining threatened ways of life, while separating the object from its spiritual, commemorative or practical significance as well as from its connection to the people from whom it was collected. As museum objects they became “authentic relics” of a vanishing past, exhibited in the romantic view of the time, and contributing to the view of the “noble savage”.

North American museums, largely due to their proximity to the First Nations of the continent, eventually realized that this did not constitute a valid representation of these cultures². A dialogue appeared, then, to be inevitable, necessary and vital. This dialogue took a more formal turn following the Lubicon Lake First Nation’s boycott of the Glenbow Museum’s exhibition “The Spirit Sings”³. Subsequent discussions resulted in the 1992 Task Force
Report on Museums and First Nations entitled: “Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships between Museums and First Peoples”. This Report made recommendations focused on three major issues that had been identified during the previous years of discussion.

The Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC) and its collections
In 2006, the Canadian Museum of Civilization, formerly the National Museum of Man, celebrated its 150th anniversary. Located, since 1989, on the north shore of the Ottawa River (or Kichi Sibi, which means the Grand River) in Algonquin territory, the museum faces the Canadian Parliament buildings.

Conceived by the architect Douglas Cardinal, of Native origin, the building, like the site, is highly symbolic. Upon entering the museum the visitor encounters the Grand Hall with a huge canoe shaped ceiling, which references the “myth of Raven’s magic canoe that could shrink to the size of a pine needle or expand to hold the entire universe”. The columns dividing the windows in this gallery represent paddles turned to the sky in a message of peace. Also on view is a reconstructed Pacific Coast village, situated between sea and forest. The steps, symbolizing waves, lead up to the house fronts, each representing a different Pacific Coast nation. A scrim backdrop reproduces the image of huge cedars.

The 25,000 square meters of display is devoted to preserving, promoting and understanding the human and social history of Canada through temporary and permanent exhibitions, inviting the visitor to live the “total experience”. This hall was the vision of former CMC Director Dr. George MacDonald, displaying objects re-contextualized according to the First Nation's recommendations and in an animated environment that provides the visitor a better understanding of the cultures represented.

Although the museum has its roots in the Geological Survey of Canada, the archaeological and ethno-grphic collections have slowly expanded. Today, CMC's complete collection includes over 60,000 ethnographic objects, 2 1/2 million archaeological objects, History, Folk Art, Children's Museum, Canadian Postal Museum and Canadian War Museum collections, all totaling approximately four million three-dimensional objects, textiles and works of art on paper. The ethnographic collection houses objects collected chiefly during the 19th and early 20th centuries, including contemporary objects. Amongst them are objects with strong cultural significance, serving either a commemorative function or intended to be used in spiritual rituals. This collection also consists of an important number of manuscripts, visual and audio archives. The archaeological collection includes mainly prehistoric and pre-contact period objects as well as those of the historic period.

At the CMC, the ethnologists and archaeologists have, over many years, established good contact, based on respect, with the different Native communities in Canada. As demonstrated in the 1970's, when masks from the Haudenosaunee collection were removed from exhibition as an expression of respect for traditional beliefs.
Conservation and Consultation with First Peoples

Since the 19th century, the work of the conservator has not escaped the evolution of science. The preservation of the material integrity of an object has become as important as the aesthetic appearance. From a craft generally aimed at giving objects a new luster, conservation has become a scientific profession based on the knowledge and application of chemistry to questions of preservation, stabilization and preventive conservation, backed by a professional code of ethics7; “to conserve the past for the present and the future”.

Collaboration between Canada’s First Nations and CMC’s curators was already dynamic, primarily in the fields of research, development and interpretation of the collection, however in response to the 1992 Report consultations were extended throughout other levels of museum operations, including conservation8.

For the CMC conservation team collaborations can raise challenging questions such as how to reconcile the scientific approach and respect for the integrity of the object dictated by the conservation perspective, with the symbolic significance attributed to it by the First Nations? One of our former colleagues, John Moses, a member of the Delaware Nation of the Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve, conservator and Native history researcher, has, on many occasions, written and spoken about the care and conservation of Native cultural materials. He warns about the risk of misunderstanding cultural significance when considering the object from an exclusively rational and scientific viewpoint. For example, the simple act of preserving some objects may be taken as an affront to the natural order of things from the Native perspective. From his own Native background, John believes that material objects cannot be separated from their history, which is also inseparable from the human element.

Some approaches taken by the conservation staff in our numerous activities related to exhibitions, loans and storage include the following:

Object integrity: For the opening of the CMC’s new building in 1989, totem poles from the collection needed restoration in preparation for exhibit in the Grand Hall. Totem poles tell us about the family and represent clan history. As the rights to these poles belong to the family, the conservation was undertaken with First Nation consultations.

Many of these totem poles although damaged by the effects of time, required only minor treatments. However, the Wakas9 pole was structurally compromised, with large areas of where the wood had completely deteriorated. One totem figure had lost its beak and required a massive restoration. This pole triggered a joint project between the artist and the conservator; the conservator performed the required structural repairs with new wood, while the artist, Douglas Cranmer, owner of the family’s rights, carved and painted the reconstructed areas. This collaborative effort very successfully respected the symbolic

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7 In Canada: Canadian Association for Conservation/Association canadienne pour la conservation et la restauration (CAC - ACCR), Code of Ethic and Guidelines for Practice 2000. [www.cac-accr.ca/english](http://www.cac-accr.ca/english)
8 In 2007, when this paper has been presented, we were a team of six conservators (half of the 1990’s team): four conservators specialized in three-dimensional objects, one conservator worked with textiles and another with art on paper and archival documents. Since 2007, in the objects’ conservation section we have faced difficult changes: Martha Segal, sadly, passed away in 2009, John Moses is pursuing his career as Policy Analyst in the Aboriginal Affairs Branch at Canadian Heritage and Ghislain Bérubé is now retired (We miss their expertise, energy and sense of humor).
9 This totem pole was originally carved by Yurhwayu for Chief Wakas, at Alert Bay, British Columbia, and was erected around 1893. It has undergone many major changes before being fully restored at CMC and displayed in front of a reconstruction of its original house in the Grand Hall.
meaning of the pole while imparting needed physical integrity.

Object like “new”: Since 1989, CMC has launched many exhibitions, one every two weeks on average, and amongst them have been a number about First Peoples. “Legends of Our Times”, an exhibition on Native ranching and rodeo life on the Plains and Plateau, prompted a consultation with the Plains and Plateau First Nations. These consultations, initiated by the curator, highlighted restrictions concerning the handling or use of some objects identified for exhibition. Although, too few of these consultations led to discussion about techniques or about the need for specific treatments, some of these issues were addressed for contemporary objects, such as saddles. Saddles, as objects of pride, must be exhibited in near perfect condition. With the guidance of Native saddle makers, some parts were replaced and the saddles were cleaned and polished. Such interventions are well documented and the conservator ensures that the products meet preservation standards.

Sacred materials from the Plains should not be handled by women who are menstruating. Specific sacred materials from the Plains should not be handled by women at all. Some objects should be placed on red cloth (like pipes).

Object of power, living object: In 1997 the conservation staff, along with other staff members, had the opportunity to attend a tobacco ceremony for the wampum, thanks to Judy Hall, Curator for the Eastern Woodlands. The late Chief Jacob Thomas, a Cayuga, conducted this ceremony and authorized the participants to ask any questions they may have about the care and storage of wampum belts. Chief Thomas’ beliefs and empirical knowledge about shells corroborate our own “scientific” knowledge. For example, he said:

- “Never use detergent or other cleaning liquids as these take life out of the shells, but diluted maple sap gives the shell strength and new life”. Conservators do not use detergent on shells, nor maple sap, though it could be of interest to test it to better understand its merits.
- As the message must not be changed, it is possible, but not essential to replace the missing beads of the belt; this, again, is compatible with our own approach.
- As a living object it has to be treated “as is”. For this reason, Chief Thomas was opposed to freezing as a method of eradicating insects. He told us once again that this “takes the life out of the shell and kills it”.

This exchange of beliefs and knowledge has expanded our understanding of these objects and the ways we can honor them. We follow Chief Thomas’ recommendations about wampum in the way we exhibit these objects.

Sacred materials from the Plains should not be handled by women who are menstruating. Specific sacred materials from the Plains should not be handled by women at all. Some objects should be placed on red cloth (like pipes).

10 Sacred materials from the Plains should not be handled by women who are menstruating. Specific sacred materials from the Plains should not be handled by women at all. Some objects should be placed on red cloth (like pipes).

11 Wampum describes beads, belts or strings made with shells. Wampum was use for different purposes: treaty, prophecy, message, and notice of death.
Some First Nation communities believe that sacred objects should never touch the ground. As well, handling of certain sacred objects is prohibited when women are menstruating, and up to five days after menstruation has stopped because women’s blood is sacred and their spiritual power during this period might be stronger than that of the object.

Consultations with First Nations communities have also enabled the identification of close to 1500 objects in the CMC’s collection, which are considered culturally sensitive. These objects are now stored in a separate area, in respect for the recommendations of the consultants. In addition, members of some communities regularly come to the CMC to honor their sacred objects through smudging and feeding ceremonies.

**Pesticides**: Some objects in our collection have been tested to determine if any heavy metal pesticide residues, such as mercury and arsenic are present. Martha Segal, former CMC conservator who led this project, conducted research into how to interpret the condition of objects containing pesticide residues and understand potential health hazards. She initiated a series of tests, in collaboration with the Canadian Conservation Institute. Since 1998, curators, conservation and collections staff from different institutions in North America, in partnership with health workers and First Nations, have been conducting research on many fronts, seeking to understand the potential health hazards of pesticide contamination and employ pest eradication methods that will protect and preserve the sacredness of the objects.

**Aboriginal interns**: Since 1992, a teaching program for Aboriginal interns has been in place at CMC. For an eight-month period, interns have the opportunity to expand their knowledge in different areas of the museum according to their interests. These internships provide the occasion to initiate a dialogue at a technical level that is based on mutual respect. For those interns interested in conservation the exchange of ideas is extended into areas concerning preventive conservation, treatments and techniques.

**Limitations to our approach**
Below are some issues that we have been able to identify in our practice; some of which we have yet to resolve and, others for which we have already adopted new working methods.

**Feminization**: Our profession was originally mostly a male profession, but has quickly become dominated by women. Obviously, handling restrictions imposed on female conservators creates quite a predicament, since a way to treat an object without manipulation has not yet been found! This concern is not an urgent dilemma, but is certainly becoming more pressing. We hope to see more men entering the profession!

**Insects**: Prevention of infestation is a challenge with respect to all of CMC’s collections. Many years ago we implemented an Integrated Pest Management system in our storage areas. Sticky traps (as well as mouse traps) are now installed under shelving units, and are checked regularly, as are specific objects, which are more intrinsically prone to insect attack. Typically, if we have any concerns with the possibility of infestation we seal the suspected object in heavy plastic and use either freezing methods or fumigation with carbon dioxide (CO2) as a preventive measure. However, to respect the beliefs of First Nations, we do not bag culturally sensitive objects in plastic, as these objects are considered manifestations of living beings or natural forces. Instead we wrap them in cotton cloth so that they can breathe.

Finally, the ritual of placing tobacco offerings in the vicinity of these objects is believed to act as a powerful insecticide, as reported by Plains curator, Morgan Baillargeon. In the event that an active infestation is discovered, we proceed...
with eradication methods on a case-by-case basis, following consultation with Native consultants.

Containerization: For objects on exhibition, CMC’s conservators often recommend the use of display cases to protect objects from dust, handling, and any possible insect problem. However, open display better serves the purpose for some First Nations objects. For example, in the First Peoples Hall at CMC, conservation services have instituted the rotation of some objects on open display. This type of display invites and allows the leaving of traditional offerings by First Nations visitors. Traditional offerings are objects like tobacco or small souvenirs and although they are invited, they can inadvertently encourage the deposit of debris into exhibits by other visitors who do not understand the cultural significance of these offerings. Open exhibits are monitored daily to remove actual garbage, but traditional offerings are left untouched.

“Dead” object: Many of us have visited museums where objects on display have been separated from the spiritual, commemorative or practical context that gives them meaning and highlights their cultural significance. In recent years this practice has been scrutinized and museum professionals are beginning to understand that the context in which an object is placed conveys tremendous meaning. To extend this idea, conservators at the CMC are tasked with keeping some First Nations ceremonial objects, requested for repatriation, in good condition with the knowledge that they may eventually return to their home communities and be put back into use in traditional ceremonies. As such, conservators seek to mitigate object contamination and degradation unless the community has determined that some forms of deterioration are acceptable.

Costs: One of our more significant limitations concerns costs: the cost of treatments; the cost of consultations; the cost of projects; the cost of equipment and materials. For example the museum presently supports the systematic testing of each object in the collection for the presence of pesticides. To balance the cost of this type of investigation and the necessity of understanding the extent of contamination, we only test a suspected object for pesticides if it is selected for loan, research or display.

Multiple Messages: Each First Nation is different and observes different rules and rituals. Furthermore, within each nation, each individual is unique, and therefore will interpret the beliefs from his/her own unique standpoint. At CMC, curators try to find common ground in order to best translate these multiple messages. However, curators are also unique individuals and their particular interpretations may also differ. In addition, every archaeologist and ethnologist approaches these ethical problems in their own way. Conservators strive to maintain a flexible attitude and endeavor to propose satisfactory solutions from these multiple messages.

Conclusion
The conservator is, by definition, neither an artist nor a craftsman, even though we may have these skills. Indeed, we cannot be “creative” with the objects or works of art that have been entrusted to our care. However, our technical and creative skills can help us broaden our exchange with Native artists and craftsmen through our understanding of the manipulation of materials. Our training provides us with the tools to appreciate objects or works of art, and admire, appreciate and respect the creator as well as the work that went into the creation. Our physical proximity to these objects brings us so much closer to the power that their spiritual and cultural significance bestows. As repositories of spiritual power and life memory

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these objects have much to tell us. They are a unique link to the people who made them and to the culture that continues to flourish with their use. As such, we are uniquely placed to understand and preserve the intangible aspects of objects as well as the tangible.

Most conservators, though they come from blended scientific backgrounds, are sensitive to these issues. We also recognize that all peoples imbue objects with significance specific to their unique perspectives. One of the goals of CMC’s conservators is to adapt our practices, in agreement with curators, to be appropriately sensitive and responsive to the unique contexts in which each object has meaning, and respond appropriately to their care.

Postscript, 2011
We are now confronting the limitations associated with reduced staff and an all female conservation team. The wheel of change has slowly turned for conservation at CMC in the last few years, challenging our ability to incorporate our increased knowledge and understanding into the way we care for our collection.

References:

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Biography
Caroline Marchand has been an ethnographic and archaeological objects conservator at Canadian Museum of Civilization since 1988. She obtained a master’s degree in conservation and restoration at the Sorbonne in 1985 and a master’s degree in archaeology (conservation aspects) in 1986.

BOOK REVIEW


It is always with excitement and anticipation that I open a new book on my favorite subject - skin processing. I am seldom disappointed, and this one is no exception. It differs from other books on the subject in that the author’s presence is strong. My impression is that this book has been in the making for a long time, and I sense the author’s wish to introduce the reader to a group of highly respected master tanners he has met, interviewed, and worked with over the last decades. In this respect the book is important as a visual representation of the craft and art of Aboriginal hide tanning throughout northern USA and Canada.
The book consists of an introduction and sixteen chapters. The author states in the introduction that the book is a collection of tanning methods and recipes compiled to present traditional knowledge about hide tanning and the physical mechanics of tanning (page 6). It may be argued that the book lacks a final chapter to sum up the authors observations and reflections, although a summary of the book can be found in the introduction.

The book may be divided, as I see it, in four parts, where the first part contains the introduction to the book. Here, the author presents himself, his background, his work and his research interests and touches upon the holistic nature and the spirituality of hide tanning and the importance of upholding traditional knowledge in a society. The respect for master tanners as skillful craftspeople and as artists is emphasized, as is their role as “community resources for cultural and traditional knowledge” (page 24). A presentation of skin working tools is also included in the introduction, but could perhaps have been slightly expanded and presented in a chapter of its own.

The next part describes and richly illustrates brain tanning of skin materials in specific areas of Canada, as well as the author’s own experimental work on brain tanning technology. The text and the illustrations, which are highly educational and well presented, give the reader an idea of the complexity of hide tanning as well as the amount of effort that lies behind the creation of every item of skin clothing. The chapter on experimental hide tanning not only gives a detailed description of the substances used in the process, but also the extensive work in manufacturing skin working tools, which are utilized in various stages of the hide tanning process.

Part three introduces thirteen tanners (chapter three to fifteen) working in northern USA and in Canada. These tanners have been taught the craft and art of hide tanning within the family or have taught themselves out of personal interest in the craft. The latter group of tanners seems to be driven by the search for the perfectly tanned skin and are continually experimenting with materials and methods, whereas the former group, which began tanning partly out of necessity or as part of the seasonal routine, uses tanning methods established in their family, with modifications to the process added over time. The information from master tanners presented in these chapters makes an important contribution to the documentation of traditional knowledge and to the revival of skin processing technology in a community while also making note of individual preferences with regard to materials and methods.

The last part of the book, chapter sixteen, is a seven page chapter called “The chemistry of hide tanning” and is written by Ruth McConnell. I am a bit uncertain as to why this chapter has been included, as it does not really go into the chemistry of the various tanning substances or how they react and interact with the collagen fiber material. The chapter, which contains a number of interesting observations, could perhaps have been included in the first part of the book as a general introduction to hide tanning.

As already mentioned - it is clear that the book has been in the making for many years, and encompasses a great number of interesting and educational issues in Aboriginal hide tanning. The illustrations are very good at presenting the author’s and master tanners work.

In conclusion I would like to draw attention to a couple of points, which I find particularly interesting. On page five of the introduction the author writes: “Traditional Aboriginal tanning involves so much more then the physical act of tanning”. This issue is clearly reflected in the presentations of the master tanners and is key to our understanding of the holistic nature of traditional knowledge. It is, furthermore, interesting to read the four points on page six, which sum up the author’s years of studying and practicing hide tanning by stating that materials and substances are not always the main issue in Aboriginal hide tanning. This is in accordance with my own experiences over the years - as long as the quality and desired properties are taken care of, practical considerations and issues of a more holistic and/or spiritual nature may sometimes be more important.

This publication is available from the website/Cyber boutique of the Canadian Museum of Civilization for $29.95 CAD. ISBN 978-0-660-19969-6.
CeROArt magazine will devote its autumn issue to a special report: "Science and conscience in conservation-restoration". Restorers, curators, scientific researchers, art historians, philosophers and museologists are invited to submit their papers to the scientific committee in English or in French. A few suggestions and lines of research are provided on the magazine’s website in the "call for papers” section: http://ceroart.revues.org/763. In particular, we insist on the importance of promoting experiences and practical cases, and remind you of our magazine’s objective to favor expression by practitioners and inter-disciplinary dialogue. The magazine’s editorial charter is available online. The closing date for submitting papers is 30 September. Contact: ceroart@mac.com; muriel.verbeeck@ceroart.org

CALL FOR PAPERS

NORTH AMERICAN TEXTILE CONSERVATION CONFERENCE
8 to 11 November 2011
Oaxaca, Mexico
Registration for the 8th biennial North American Textile Conservation Conference in Oaxaca, Mexico, November 8th - 11th, 2011, is now open. Please go to the conference website (www.NATCConference.com) for more details about the conference and information on pre-conference workshops and pre- & post-conference tours.

COLLOQUIUM: THE LIFE OF THINGS - THE PRESERVATION OF ETHNOGRAPHIC OBJECTS AND THEIR STORIES
11 to 12 November 2011
Stuttgart, Germany
What are objects able to tell us? - About their makers and users, collectors, researchers and conservators, who have all left their marks. What do these tell us about people? In cooperation with the Linden-Museum and the German Conservators’ Association (VdR) the State Academy of Art and Design Stuttgart will deal with these questions, considering especially the contribution of conservators to the "life of things”. Please visit the website for further information: http://www.ethnographic-objects.abk-stuttgart.de/

INTRODUCTION TO FEATHER CONSERVATION
9 to 11 November 2011
Norwich, UK
A two-day workshop plus visits to Museums and Conservation Studios in Norwich - 1 day (optional). The Norfolk Museum and Archaeology Service is organizing a two-day workshop on the conservation of feathers, to be hosted at the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service conservation studios, Norwich, UK. Allyson Rae, who has extensive experience in the conservation of artifacts incorporating feathers, will lead the workshop. Now a freelance conservator, she was Head of Organic Artifacts Conservation at the British Museum until 2006. Encompassing both theoretical and practical sessions, the workshop will cover the structure and nature of feathers, their causes of deterioration and principles and practice for
non-interventive, and basic interventive options (soil removal, reshaping, repair techniques). Participants are encouraged to bring images of feathered objects to the workshop for discussion. Ten places are available. Please contact Helen Rush; helen.rush@norfolk.gov.uk to register your interest and for a draft program.

THE 15TH INTERNATIONAL COURSE ON WOOD CONSERVATION TECHNOLOGY - ICWCT 2012
23 May to 29 June 2012
Oslo, Norway (Premises of the Riksantikvaren)
The course is organized under the auspices of UNESCO by: ICCROM; Riksantikvaren - the Directorate for Cultural Heritage, Norway; NTNU - Norwegian University of Science and Technology Norway.
The ICWCT was initiated as a response to a recommendation from UNESCO’s General Conference in 1980, and it has been organized in Norway every second year since 1984. It is directed towards professionals who have been working for some years within the field of wood conservation. The ICWCT covers a wide range of interdisciplinary topics. Theoretical and practical aspects of wood conservation are given equal consideration throughout the course. Some of the most interesting cultural heritage sites constructed in wood in Norway will be visited during the course, including the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Urnes Stave church and the Hanseatic Wharf in Bergen. Exercises and demonstrations are organized during the main excursion. The course concludes with a written exam, which awards university credits if passed.
Applicants should be mid-career professionals with a minimum of three years work experience in wood conservation. It is of great importance for the success of the course that the participants have relevant experience to contribute to and benefit from the mutual exchange of ideas. The number of participants is limited to 20. The working language of the course is English. Application: obtainable from ICCROM web site: www.iccrom.org. Applications should reach ICCROM by 30 September 2011. For further information please contact: Ms. Anne Nyhamar (The Directorate for Cultural Heritage) e-mail: any@ra.no.