

COLLECTIONS DOCUMENTATION: THE ART OF MRS. GERTIE TOM

by

ALLISON ELAINE CRONIN

B.A., The University of British Columbia, 1989

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(Department of Anthropology and Sociology)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

February 1995

© Allison Elaine Cronin, 1995

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of Anthropology & Sociology
The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date March 21, 1995

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the documentation process of a collection of contemporary objects made by a Northern Tutchone artist, Mrs. Gertie Tom, from Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. The beaded moosehide objects were purchased by the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology between 1992 and 1994, and include a vest, a 'shell' belt, gloves, moccasins, mittens, and a hat. The documentation process included Mrs. Tom documenting her objects in her own words. This thesis investigates the steps, cost, and time involved in documenting the six objects. It also explores how object documentation fits within museological debates on access, collections management, and current museology.

Museums are facing an increasingly changing environment. Originating people are requesting changes in the relationship between museums and objects. The cost of caring for museum collections is increasing and many objects within these collections are inadequately documented and consequently of little value for research. At the same time, museums continue to collect. In addition, many scholars think the future of museums is in current and controversial ideas rather than objects. The single, often paternalistic, museum message is being challenged, and people are arguing for museums to exhibit a variety of voices and opinions. This thesis answers the questions: What does this project contribute to issues of collections access, especially with reference to First Nations material? What costs are involved in documenting museum collections? Does documentation improve information available on collections? Does it allow people, not just objects, to become an integral part of museums and to bring new ideas and issues to museums?

Although the documentation process required a commitment of time and money, my research confirms that having people document their own objects is beneficial in reference to current museological issues. The information provided by Mrs. Tom not only documents her objects but offers insight into other aspects of her life and Northern Tutchone culture in general. The documentation, in addition to providing answers to questions such as provenience, use, and materials, reveals ideas and interpretations of the objects from Mrs. Tom's point of view. Having Mrs. Tom document her objects in her own words means she, rather than the museum, is the authoritative voice. In an effort to bring a balance between objects and ideas, museums should only acquire objects they can afford to document.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. MUSEUM ISSUES	3
i. Material Culture and Museums	3
ii. Collections Documentation	4
iii. Museums, First People, and Documentation of Collections	7
iv. Museums, Ideas, and Audiences	9
III. DOCUMENTING A SMALL COLLECTION: THE ART OF MRS. GERTIE TOM	10
i. Compiling the Documentation	10
ii. Research in Whitehorse	12
iii. Mrs. Tom's Life and Work	16
iv. The Museum of Anthropology's Collection of Mrs. Tom's Objects	20
IV. DOCUMENTATION PROCESS	26
i. Process, Time, and Cost of Gathering Existing Documentation	26
ii. Process, Time, and Cost of Gathering New Documentation	28
iii. Characteristics of this Case Study	29
V. DISCUSSION	31
i. What Does the Documentation Say About Mrs. Tom's Objects?	31
ii. Is Thorough Documentation Relevant?	32
iii. Is Thorough Documentation Attainable?	33
VI. CONCLUSION	35
BIBLIOGRAPHY	39
APPENDIX A	44

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Jacket panel made by Mrs. Tom's grandmother, laid out on a patchwork quilt at Mrs. Tom's home	14
Figure 2	Mrs. Tom at her home in Whitehorse, July 1994	15
Figure 3	'Shell' belt (MOA #1563/1) and vest (MOA #1563/2) made by Mrs. Tom	21
Figure 4	Gloves (MOA #1636/1ab) made by Mrs. Tom	23
Figure 5	Mittens (MOA #1637/1), hat (MOA #1637/2), and moccasins (MOA #1638/1ab) made by Mrs. Tom	25
Figure 6	Costs of the Documentation Process	27

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor Julie Cruikshank for her thoughtful advice, support and enthusiasm both in my course work and my research. Her foresight and commitment made graduate school a rewarding adventure. I owe my committee member Michael Kew thanks not only for his insightful comments and encouragement, but also for first sparking my interest in anthropology during a UBC Open House lecture I attended when I was in elementary school. My gratitude goes to Mrs. Gertie Tom. Her hospitality and eagerness to work on this project made my research an enjoyable and satisfying experience. Thank you very much Gertie!

Appreciation and praise goes to Judy Thompson, from the Canadian Museum of Civilization, for the time and energy she put into answering questions I had at the start of my research. I would also like to acknowledge Ingrid Johnson and Joanne Meehan from the MacBride Museum, Whitehorse, for the time they took to explain their research, and for the interest they showed in mine.

I want to thank my family, especially my parents, who have encouraged and sustained me in my studies, with everything from dinners to proof-reading. Andrew Mason deserves special thanks for his constant support and understanding. His candid advice and reassuring words are always appreciated. Thank you also to his family who regularly provided me with welcome distractions from school.

Financial support for my research in Whitehorse was provided by a Research Fellowship from the Northern Research Institute, Yukon College. Additional funding was provided by an internal Research Grant from the Research and Teaching Committee at the UBC Museum of Anthropology.

I. INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores the role documentation can play in museological debates surrounding issues of access, collections management, and current museology. I will focus on the process of documenting a small collection of objects created by a contemporary First Nations artist and illustrate how the documentation ties into several areas of museological interest. My case study is based on the recent acquisition by the University of British Columbia (UBC) Museum of Anthropology (MOA) of six objects made by Mrs. Gertie Tom, a Northern Tutchone (Athapaskan) woman, from Whitehorse, Yukon Territory.

The topic for this thesis developed from the range of perspectives I have encountered as the Assistant Collections Manager at the UBC Museum of Anthropology and as a Master's student in the UBC Department of Anthropology. As an anthropology graduate student I am exposed to new ways of looking at cultural institutions and have become aware of how museums are changing from places for objects to be stored, towards arenas for examining today's political and social issues (see Vergo 1989; Ames 1992; Lumley 1988). Current museum literature, for example, calls for re-examination of the socio-political influences that shape these institutions and their exhibitions (Vergo 1989). Controversial and emotionally charged issues and ideas are being discussed which question the centrality of the object within museums (see Van Mensch 1990; Davies 1994a:7). The theoretical debate concerning objects parallels and often intersects with discussions questioning the role of collections management. Ames says:

Collections become an expensive burden to museums because of the mandate to preserve and exhibit them even though so little is known about them that it is difficult to present them authentically. (1992:159)

In a time of financial restraint, the cost of looking after large, undocumented collections is being questioned, yet at the same time, museums continue to collect.

As a museum professional directly involved in the management of museum collections, I experience the impact of these changes directly. Changes in museology have specific implications for collections management. Museums must respond quickly to increasing requests for collections information. However it is generally acknowledged that many museum collections and objects are inadequately documented. They cannot deal effectively with information access, or enable research (Ames 1992:159-160; Furst 1989; Nason 1987; Reynolds 1989). Frequently in museum collections, there is scant information about the objects themselves and even less about the relationship between objects and their makers or their previous owner(s). There are also new directions in the relationship between museums and First Peoples, including national recommendations for museums to improve physical and intellectual access to collections and for museums to increase their involvement with people, rather than objects (Task Force on Museums and First Peoples 1992:4,8).

The following discussion will explore the role of documentation of one collection in a contemporary museum. I decided to investigate this issue by examining the stages involved in documenting a small collection of contemporary First Nations objects. The collection consists of artistic works by a Northern Tutchone woman named Mrs. Gertie Tom who lives in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. From 1992 to 1994 the UBC Museum of Anthropology purchased six home-tanned, beaded objects from Mrs. Tom. The collection includes a vest, a 'shell' belt, a hat, gloves, mittens and moccasins. My objective has been to work with the artist to document her objects in her own words. I ask the following

questions. What does such a project contribute to issues of collections access, especially with reference to First Nations material? What costs are involved in documentation? Does documentation resulting from such projects improve information available on collections? Does it allow people, not just objects, to become an integral part of museums and to bring new ideas and issues to museums?

II. MUSEUM ISSUES

i. Material Culture and Museums

Anthropology and museums were closely connected from 1880 to 1920 when one major focus of anthropology was material culture research and collecting (Collier and Tschopik 1954:769-772). Early museum collections were made by scholars as part of their fieldwork (see Parezo 1987; Hall 1983; Cole 1985) but as anthropology's focus on material culture waned, and funding decreased, so did field collecting (Nason 1987:32). From the 1920's onward museums and material culture became less fashionable. This change in focus was largely due to a shift in anthropological instruction away from museums and towards universities. At the same time, anthropology began to focus more on ideas of social organization than material culture (Fenton 1960:333). Not until the 1970's did material culture research in anthropology make a resurgence (Stott and Reynolds 1987:2). Since then, there have been regular and consistent contributions to material culture studies in anthropology (see Babcock 1986; Freeman 1990; Ljungstrom 1989; Ridington 1982), but generally material culture studies have remained grounded in museums.

Today, most university based anthropologists continue to investigate issues of social organization while only a small percentage work with museum collections (Sturtevant 1969). In spite of this, museums continue to collect new objects in the

name of research (Stocking 1985:8-9). Contemporary museum acquisitions are mostly donations, purchases, bequests and transfers, rather than field collections (Nason 1987:33; Parezo 1987:5-6). Objects obtained in these ways rarely come with the documentation that ideally accompanies a field collection (Parezo 1987:6). This shift in acquisition sources has created a different focus for museum collecting. In some cases objects seem to be collected for their physical qualities rather than as sources of cultural information.

ii. Collections Documentation

Collecting objects remains one of the chief objectives of active museums. As Nason says,

...the primary and fundamental objective of every museum is to collect. This is not only a functional objective but also a moral if not a legal duty imposed upon us by virtue of our charters as public institutions. (Nason 1987:40)

As well as collecting objects, museums are expected to collect information about the objects (see Cantwell, Griffin and Rothschild 1981). Museum rhetoric focuses on the value of well-documented objects, especially those that were collected 'in the field'. Objects without associated documentation are considered, "...of little scientific value" (Parezo 1987:6).

The benefits of well-documented collections are many. Thorough documentation means that collections can be used to their full advantage for research and that the information is available to originating peoples, scholars and the general public. Documentation can result from many research techniques such as interviews, archival searches or fieldwork, and it allows museums to give intellectual and physical access to objects. As Lochnan says, "It is research activity...that distinguishes a dead museum from a live one" (1983:18).

Nevertheless, researchers in museums constantly face the difficulties related to working with objects that are inadequately documented. The absence of documentation has been the focus of considerable discussion (see Nason 1987; Mori and Mori 1972; McGillivray 1991; Fenton 1960). In discussing existing collections, Hans Jorg Furst says:

The research potential of ethnographic specimens is determined to a high degree by the quality of documentation. However, the state of documentation of most objects can only be described as just short of devastating.... (1989:101-102)

Much of the poor documentation has been inherited from earlier colleagues, but even the documentation of recently acquired objects can be unacceptable. Furst goes on to state:

...bearing in mind the quite unsatisfactory state of documentation of already existing collections, often newly acquired collections are not documented much more fully. (1989:103)

Museums are left to contend with collections that do not have consolidated information on their history. This leaves museums unable to know accurately the potential or boundaries of their collections, and it hinders the accessibility of the collections to their audiences.

Documentation is more than simply recording an object's maker's name, its culture and 'traditional' use. It also involves taking the time to discover what people associated with the object, such as the artist, owner or collector, can tell museums about the object and their relationship to that object. The Alberta Museums Association (AMA) Handbook states, "The value of an object as a source of knowledge is enhanced by the information that is collected along with it" (Davies 1990:192). This information needs to be gathered from people who have a relationship with the object. As the AMA states, "Research of objects involves both consideration of the object for what it alone can reveal, as well as what can be

discovered about its context from additional sources of information" (Davies 1990:185).

Barbara Babcock, in her work with Pueblo artist Helen Cordero, has successfully documented Pueblo ceramic figures by letting the artist explain the meaning behind her objects. Babcock explores, "...the relationship between [Helen Cordero's] art and her life..." (1986:321). By having Mrs. Cordero document her own objects, Babcock found that, "objects do speak and should be heard as significant statements of personal and cultural reflexivity" (1986:318). The objects become more meaningful through documentation. By talking with Mrs. Cordero, Babcock discovered that the ceramic figures are not only aesthetically pleasing, they also hold valuable information about Mrs. Cordero and Pueblo culture (Babcock 1986:321,337). For people connected to objects, the objects offer connections to other aspects of life. Some of these interesting connections can be explored and shared with wider audiences when time is spent to document objects.

Documenting objects when they are acquired means that their prior contexts and relationships can be known, but the documentation process cannot stop once objects enter museums. Webster says:

Everything that is known about an object should be recorded in permanent form and connected to it in some way. This includes information about an object's native use and meaning, the circumstances surrounding its acquisition by the non-native culture, and the treatments and changes that the object has subsequently undergone. (1990:151)

By documenting the life history of the object, the object becomes more than something pretty or unusual to look at, it becomes a window into other aspects of culture and museum practices (Kopytoff 1986:66-68). Museums must make the effort to document because without the objects' documentation much of their meaning and significance is lost. As the AMA Handbook says, "Objects may be

interesting or beautiful in and of themselves, but, without research much of the potential information they contain remains unknown" (Davies 1990:185).

Objects hold more information than their maker's name or intended use and can be keys to other aspects of culture such as symbolism, family histories, collectors' histories and oral traditions. In England, the Oxfordshire Museums have a programme called 'museum boxes'. This programme involves groups of related objects for people to explore, think about and if they want, to talk about. In discussing these boxes Karen Hull says, "A conch shell in the Day at the Seaside box once prompted an afternoon's discussion on hedgehogs; an association few curators would have made" (Hull 1994:25). It is discovering this type of information that makes objects interesting.

iii. Museums, First Peoples, and Documentation of Collections

Museums have historically concentrated on their relationships with objects, rather than with people, but such relationships are now being widely challenged (see Karp and Lavine 1991 and Karp, Kreamer and Lavine 1992). Originating peoples worldwide are participating in discussions about the future of museums that hold their objects. In Australia for example, the Council of Australian Museum Associations has formulated policies outlining the relationship between Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander People and museums (1992). One of their policy statements reads: "People from the relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community should be involved in improving the documentation of the collections" (1992:14).

In Canada, the response to originating peoples concerns about the future of museums resulted in The Task Force on Museums and First Peoples. That Task

Force made a number of recommendations and findings regarding the future relationship of cultural institutions with originating peoples and objects. The results are set out in *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples* (1992). Certain recommendations laid out in *Turning the Page* have specific implications for museum collections.

One of the Task Force's points is that, "...museums are identified as having the potential to engage with living cultures, not just objects" (1992:4). This implies that museums must find more ways of interacting with people. One way museums could address this, is by having originating people document their own culture's objects in museum collections. Through the documentation process, museums could work with people and reveal cultural aspects of objects. Another Task Force recommendation directly affects collections:

...museums should...provide full disclosure of existing information relating to Aboriginal collections. Such information will include the scope of the collection, the kinds of objects included, and the geographical location, cultural affiliation, means and period of acquisition. (1992:8)

Although this recommendation refers to existing collections, it also sets a standard for contemporary collecting.

The areas of collections documentation, current museology issues and museums and originating cultures are often portrayed as distinct topics. There are those who think that objects and ideas can be combined with positive results for museums. As Stuart Davies says, "The debate over people and objects may conceal the important fact that the two aspects together can give museums social purpose" (1994:22).

iv. Museums, Ideas, and Audiences

Objects need to be understood not only in relationship to their originating cultures, but also in relationship to museum audiences (which can include originating cultures). Current museological literature struggles to find a balance between objects and ideas in museums. Weil says, "...we must bring thought into some closer parity with things and make a discussion of ideas - not just a display of objects - an integral part of the visitor's museum-going experience" (1989:31). Some discussions are emphasizing the relationships between objects and audiences, rather than those between objects and museums. Museums are encouraged to admit their biases and to examine and explore how these biases affect exhibitions (Vergo 1989:3). Weil says, "Rather than holding itself forth as the authoritative or exclusive source of historical interpretation or esthetic judgment, the museum would hope to enlist the visitor as a collaborator..." (1989:32). In this formulation museum visitors can come to their own conclusions about challenging and controversial ideas.

In his article "Museums, Artefacts and Meanings", Smith outlines three areas he feels museums need to address to keep up with current museology practices (1989:6-21). First museums must focus on the life-cycle of objects, rather than their "original state". Second, museum exhibitions must be honest about the biases they possess and allow more than one voice to speak; and third, museum research needs to shift from the, "...original circumstances of an object's production" towards "...the relationship between the artefact and its life-cycle" (1989:20). Each of these issues intersects with concerns raised by originating peoples, and with object documentation. The remainder of this thesis will investigate these issues with reference to a specific case study.

III. DOCUMENTING A SMALL COLLECTION: THE ART OF MRS. GERTIE TOM

My case study will focus on the work of Mrs. Gertie Tom, a Tutchone Athapaskan artist, who recently made six objects for the Museum of Anthropology. I will explore the stages involved in documenting a collection. I will investigate the steps, costs and staff investment involved in object documentation. I will assess whether the documentation process results in greater accessibility of the objects and whether it allows people, not only objects, to become an integral aspect of museums. I will also examine what implications this has for collections management.

In the summer of 1992, Mrs. Tom approached colleague Julie Cruikshank, then a curator at the UBC Museum of Anthropology, and asked if the Museum would be interested in purchasing examples of her beadwork. The Museum of Anthropology bought two of Mrs. Tom's beaded moosehide pieces, a vest and a belt, and commissioned several other pieces. Mrs. Tom continued to work with the Museum and by October 1994 the Museum had added a pair of gloves, a pair of mittens with matching hat, and a pair of moccasins to their collection. Mrs. Tom is currently (January 1995) working on a gun case and a baby belt for the collection.

i. Compiling the Documentation

My first task was to compile the existing documentation about Mrs. Tom's work. At the time the vest and belt were purchased, the curator involved spoke with Mrs. Tom about each object, recorded the conversations and transcribed them. The curator deposited seven pages of transcripts on the vest, four pages on the belt, and one audio-tape, with the Museum. At the same time a Museum of

Anthropology form entitled "Acquisitions Background Information" (Appendix A) was completed for each object. The form asks for words for objects and materials in original languages, as well as other relevant information such as symbolism, history of use, and the maker's and collector's background. All of this material is easily retrievable in the Museum archives, in the documentation file associated with each object.

The documentation file also includes confidential information such as copies of the statements of payment and a statement of permission for the tape to be available to researchers and scholars. In addition, the Museum's administrative files contain an exhibition proposal on the possibility of creating an exhibition on Mrs. Tom's work - both as a language specialist and as an artist (Cruikshank 1992). Again this proposal is kept separately from the collection files.

In the case of Mrs. Tom's work I was able to locate additional documentation. Two books Mrs. Tom wrote while at the Yukon Native Language Centre, *How to Tan Hides in the Native Way* (1981) and *My Country: Big Salmon River* (1987) are available at the Museum. Following the Museum's classification system these books are housed in the library physically separated from the collections documentation. Cruikshank's exhibition proposal (1992) indicated that there was a short video produced by Northern Native Broadcasting (1992) interviewing Mrs. Tom.¹ I received a copy of the interview from Cruikshank and transcribed nine pages of transcript. This information has subsequently been added to objects' documentation file.

1 The video was purchased from Northern Native Broadcasting.

ii. Research in Whitehorse

At the time of the purchase of the vest and belt, the Museum prepared a small contract with Mrs. Tom for her to make several more items for the Museum. Mrs. Tom proposed to make gloves, a hat, mittens, moccasins, a gun case and a baby belt. As my case study, I decided I would work with Mrs. Tom to document the remaining items.

I flew to Whitehorse in July 1994 and met with Mrs. Tom for four days, from July 8 - 13, to interview her about the objects she was making and her life history. My main objective was to have Mrs. Tom talk about her objects, in her own words. In addition, I wanted Mrs. Tom to address the questions from MOA's "Acquisitions Background Information" form (Appendix A). At the time I was in Whitehorse, Mrs. Tom had completed the pair of gloves that she wanted MOA to purchase so we specifically discussed this work (see Tom 1994b). I first met with Mrs. Tom in her home on a Friday morning at 9:30 a.m.. Julie Cruikshank accompanied me and made the initial introductions and stayed while we discussed the scope of the project, and then left Mrs. Tom and me to work until close to noon. The next three weekday mornings I returned to Mrs. Tom's home at 10:00 a.m.. We began each day by briefly discussing what she hoped to talk about and then, after checking to ensure the tape recorder was operating correctly, we would start work. Each session lasted about one hour, after which Mrs. Tom would drive me back into town, a fifteen minute drive from her home.

On the first day Mrs. Tom discussed what she felt was relevant about the objects she had made and was making for the Museum. The second day, at my request, she spoke specifically about the gloves the Museum had just purchased from her, and on the third day she talked about her life. On the fourth day, we

reviewed rough transcripts I had made of the previous three days tapes to ensure Mrs. Tom agreed to the contents being kept in the Museum's archives for scholars and researchers to use. Mrs. Tom's main concern in reviewing the transcripts was to ensure that she had not forgotten to tell me something important.

The three days of interviews resulted in three separate tapes and just over fifty pages of transcripts. The tapes, their transcriptions, invoices, paperwork and permission statements for the gloves have all been filed together. I also filled out an "Acquisitions Background Information" form on the gloves. All of this information will go into the gloves' documentation file in the Museum archives.

On our first day working together, Mrs. Tom gave me two photographs to add to the documentation file. One of the photographs is of three pairs of mukluks Mrs. Tom sold at a festival in Juneau, Alaska, and illustrates several points that Mrs. Tom made on tape on July 8, 1994. The second photograph is of a moosehide that Mrs. Tom had tanned and was waiting to smoke. Again, this photo supplements the July 8, 1994 transcript (Tom 1994a).

While visiting Mrs. Tom I took some photographs as well. I took a photograph of Mrs. Tom's grandmother's beadwork design that is on a red cloth jacket panel (Figure 1). Mrs. Tom explains the symbolism behind her grandmother's patterns in the transcripts. I also took a photograph of Mrs. Tom so that people working with the objects could see what she looks like (Figure 2).

Between July and October 1994, Mrs. Tom made three more objects for MOA; a pair of moccasins, a hat, and a pair of mittens. She had discussed each of

Figure 1

Jacket panel made by Mrs. Tom's grandmother, laid out on a patchwork quilt at Mrs. Tom's home



Photo by A. Cronin

Figure 2

Mrs. Tom at her home in Whitehorse, July 1994



Photo by A. Cronin

these objects in July, but now they were finished, I needed to record specific information - time involved, type of fur used and the symbolism of the designs.

Mrs. Tom came to Vancouver for a holiday in October 1994 and I met with her on Thursday, October 13 for a few hours at the Museum. During this time I was able to record the information I needed to complete an "Acquisitions Background Information" form for each object. Again, this information will be included in the documentation files for these objects.

iii. Mrs. Tom's Life and Work

Working from existing documentation and from my conversations with Mrs. Tom, I have compiled a brief account of her life and work. Mrs. Gertie Tom is a skilled artist who not only does beautiful beadwork, but also tans her own hides and sews with sinew that she prepares by hand (Tom 1994a:5-6). She was born in 1927 at Big Salmon in the central Yukon, and lived there with her parents and siblings until she was twenty-one years old. Tutchone people, like other Northern Athapaskan First Nations, have always been travellers. Mrs. Tom grew up travelling according to the seasons and availability of wildlife, learning from her parents how to depend on herself in the bush. Mrs. Tom says, "And when we were young, my mother taught us how to survive, how to live" (1992b:4). Mrs. Tom's descriptions of the seasonal subsistence and settlement patterns she followed with her family are very similar to the patterns ethnographers recorded for Tutchone people during the late nineteenth century (McClellan 1981).

In spring and summer, families lived together fishing and drying salmon for the winter. As fall approached the families would divide into smaller groups, each travelling separately to hunt, dry and cache food for winter (McClellan 1981:496). Mrs. Tom describes what autumn was like when she was younger:

We'd walk and walk and walk. We had dog packs and we had to pack something on our back. We used to walk up [river] a long way, then camp there and people went out hunting and ...sometimes they killed a moose and we'd dry some meat.... That's what they used to do, they dried meat and then they'd go on and on like that. And then wherever the main camp is they'd stay there. And if they got too much meat, and they can't pack it anymore, then just the men would go out hunting and they'd bring all the meat into the camp. And then meanwhile they saved all that skin, so they can make a mooseskin boat [to get back down the river]. (1994b:7)²

Until the 1940's, transportation in the Yukon was mainly by foot or by boat.

Families walked long distances up rivers to hunt and fish, and then often rafted or rowed back to their winter camps with dried meat and fish (Tom 1994c:2). In the winter people relied on snowshoes and toboggans to get around (Tom 1994c:4,7).

During the first months of winter, people continued to hunt and trap game (Tom 1994c:4; McClellan 1981:496). At the height of winter, families once again came together as a group, relying mainly on cached food for their subsistence (McClellan 1987:496). If someone found game, the family that killed it shared the fresh meat with all the other families (Tom 1994c:3). By the end of winter, food caches were empty and the group would again break up into smaller family units to search for game, and then gather together at whitefish spawning grounds in early spring (McClellan 1987:496). Even after contact in the early 1900's, the Tutchone followed a similar subsistence cycle, adding summer jobs such as wood cutting for the Yukon River steamboats in exchange for staples such as flour, sugar, rice and tea (Tom 1994c:1-2).

During her years at Big Salmon and travelling in the central Yukon, Mrs. Tom learned many survival skills, including drying meat, making mooseskin boats, fishing, snaring, making sinew, tanning hide, and sewing (1994c). Sewing played an important role in Mrs. Tom's upbringing:

² Mrs. Tom approved editing of her transcripts for this thesis.

So she [Mrs. Tom's mother] taught us how to survive, sewing. Ever since I was eight years old, I learned to sew. And I used to try to sew moccasins. I did beadwork, that's pretty good you know, keep practicing. But moccasins are pretty hard to gather around (at the top). Every time I finished it, she said, "It still doesn't look good!" Boy, I would get upset and I would have to undo it again. Keep on doing that. That's how I used to do that. But in the end, it worked out for me - like I can sew, and I can do lots of things. All of us in the family, they taught us pretty good, my mother and dad, they taught us really good. (1992b:4)

In the 19th century Tutchone summer clothing consisted of hide leggings with feet and long shirts. Winter clothes were made from tanned furs with the fur side of shirts and leggings worn next to the body. The cold weather meant hare-skin jackets, hats, and mitts became necessary (McClellan 1981:498). In addition, people had a fur robe, for which they were solely responsible, for sleeping or as needed for warmth (McClellan 1981:498; Tom 1994c:2). In the 1930's Mrs. Tom's mother was making similar garments for her family:

...my mother use to make things for us all the time. We had to wear what we had. When you're in the bush, it doesn't matter as long as it's warm. Sometimes, they made gopher³ skin jackets, sometimes they made sheep skin jackets, caribou hide, tanned like that with the fur, they made it like that. (Tom 1994a:22)

Mrs. Tom also learned how to prepare and tan skins for sewing (Tom 1994a:5).

She recalls a time when she was ten:

My sister prepared a moosehide there [at Ts'andlia] for tanning. That's another reason we stayed there for quite a while; we also stayed so that the meat could dry and become lighter. I practiced working on a skin using the leg skin of a moose so that I could learn how to prepare a hide. I wasn't very good at it yet. (Tom 1987:40)

At twenty-one, Mrs. Tom, along with her parents and siblings, moved to Whitehorse because the steamboats had stopped running from Dawson City to Whitehorse, thereby eliminating her family's cash flow from cutting wood (Tom 1987:1, 1994c:5). In Big Salmon, Mrs. Tom spoke primarily Northern Tutchone,

3 A type of ground squirrel.

although she did learn to speak English while cutting wood for the steamboats (Tom 1992b:5). After living in Whitehorse for a few years, Mrs. Tom had to go to Edmonton (1992b:5). As Mrs. Tom explains:

I had TB [tuberculosis] and so that's where I learned to read and write [English]. I was in Charles Camsell hospital for three years and I learned to read and write. I really worked hard at it and that's why I learned to read and write. (1994c:5)

On her return to Whitehorse, Mrs. Tom used her linguistic fluency in a number of jobs. In the 1960's she worked for CBC radio as a disc jockey. She played requests, announcing the song titles in Tutchone (Tom 1992b:6). Mrs. Tom also worked for the Northern Health Service, travelling around central Yukon assisting doctors with elders who did not speak English (Tom 1994c:5). During the 1970's she was hired by the Alaska Pipeline Inquiry, again for her linguistic ability (Tom 1987:84). Eventually, Mrs. Tom began work with the Yukon Native Language Centre. Mrs. Tom says:

In 1977, John Ritter [of the Language Centre] asked me to work with him and teach him my language, the Northern Tutchone language. So I worked with him and talked with him and he recorded me. In return, he taught me how to read and write the language. It was a lot of work, but after I learned how to do it, I started working with people in the communities, taping old time stories. (Tom 1987:6)

With her knowledge, Mrs. Tom has worked with linguists to prepare booklets in both Northern Tutchone and English (see Tom 1981; 1987), and Northern Tutchone language lessons (Tom 1987:84). Mrs. Tom retired from the Language Centre in 1992.

Throughout her life Mrs. Tom has continuously sewn and beaded hides she has tanned herself:

All the time I sew... even though I know how to sew, it takes a little while to catch on again, if you leave it too long you know. You have to keep on doing it, that's how you improve yourself. (Tom 1994c:6)

Mrs. Tom, with the help of her husband, continues to tan hides the way she learned growing up in Big Salmon (Tom 1994a:7). One of Mrs. Tom's booklets, *How to Tan Hides in the Native Way* (1981), written in Northern Tutchone and English, combines her knowledge of hide processing and language.

Since retiring Mrs. Tom has been able to focus more of her time on making home-tanned beaded garments and accessories, using the same methods and techniques she learned from her mother. Many of the beaded designs she uses have been passed down to her from her mother's mother. Tutchone people trace their descent matrilineally and inherit membership in one of two moieties through their mothers. Like her grandmother and mother, Mrs. Tom belongs to the Crow moiety (Tom 1987:6). Mrs. Tom has the right to use her grandmother's designs, and still has a jacket panel beaded with old designs that her grandmother made in 1913 (Tom 1994a:1). The old designs represent plant and animal motifs, and along with contemporary flower designs, Mrs. Tom continues to use them in her work (Tom 1994a:1). Mrs. Tom makes items to sell at festivals and for special orders; she has also begun to teach beadwork at adult workshops (see Tom 1994a).

iv. The Museum of Anthropology's Collection of Mrs. Tom's Objects

As of January 1995 the Museum of Anthropology has six pieces of Mrs. Tom's work in its collection. The first pieces were acquired in 1992 - a vest and a 'shell' belt (Figure 3). The vest is decorated with both new and old designs. Each of the front panels depicts a man dressed up for a celebration. Mrs. Tom explains that the man depicted represents how people behaved and dressed "...a long time ago" (Tom 1992b:1), so when she refers to the vest as an "old fashioned" pattern she is referring to theme rather than to design:

Figure 3

'Shell' belt (MOA #1563/1) and vest (MOA #1563/2) made by Mrs. Tom



Photo by A. Cronin

...When you kill a moose, you say, "I'll give you the moose." In return, you have to take all the best parts and invite the whole village for the feast. That's when they all dressed up. They braided their hair and painted up their faces for the dance. (1992b:1)

The other design on the vest is a flower pattern.⁴ She explains how this contemporary pattern is old in technique, but not in design:

The flowers are like 'today' flowers. But in the olden days when they were sewing, they used to fill the beads up in (solid patterns) so I filled the beads up. The back is a modern style, but again, I filled the beads up. (Tom 1992b:2)

The 'shell' belt, or cartridge belt, was made based on a style Mrs. Tom remembers from her childhood:

Well I saw it in 1920-1930. People used to make those shell bags for their husband.... The reason why they had a shell bag is because if they saw a moose or bear they could get into the shells easily - all they do is just lift the flap up and load the gun and that makes it easier for the people.... (1992a:1)

The belt was originally made for a local craft contest and won "most original and best piece" in 1990. The beadwork on the belt is also a combination of new and old:

...I put an old design on one part of it (the waist band) because I know this (idea for the shell bag) comes from 1920 or '30 and people used to have a shell bag, so I put the old design along the bottom. And then on the side I had to fill it in, so I just picked what colour design I wanted, just a 'today' design. (Tom 1992a:4)

The gloves were made by Mrs. Tom in 1994 and purchased by the Museum the same year (Figure 4). The gloves were originally made to sell at a Tlingit festival in Juneau, Alaska. The festival, according to Mrs. Tom was,

...a gathering of Indians together. They have dancing, all different groups come in to dance and entertain other people, like longtime ago, and they try to bring the dancing back. (1994b:3)

⁴ These contemporary flower designs are available in commercially produced pattern books (Tom 1994a:11).

Figure 4

Gloves (MOA #1636/1ab) made by Mrs. Tom



Photo by A. Cronin

Mrs. Tom decorated the gloves with fur, a hide fringe and flower patterns:

...when you finished sewing you put fur on it to make it look good and fringes on the side, for decoration. That's how people used to do it.... I picked the flower pattern because I just tried to make it look like real flowers, that's what I tried to do. (Tom 1994b:1-2,9)

The hat and mitts were made in the fall of 1994 as a set and are decorated with the designs that Mrs. Tom inherited from her grandmother and mother (Figure 5). Along with this set, Mrs. Tom made a pair of moccasins which she says she decorated with an old water-plant design (Figure 5) (Tom 1994d). The old designs flow into each other, and have a more continuous line than contemporary flower patterns (Tom 1994a:1). Mrs. Tom explains that she interprets her grandmother's patterns as possibly representing a framed moosehide, a wildflower, and a grouse's foot (Figure 1):

And when people sew, they have their own designs. You see, you'd never see the same designs. I don't know how they made this design here [her grandmother's pattern] because it was before my time. This is sort of like a square. I figure may be this is more like when you frame a moosehide. It looks like it to me. I just gathered how it is, you know, tied up, just like when you frame a moosehide and that's how design was.

This one here is a wildflowers design on there [predominantly white, to left of top center]. I don't know that one, this is what, they call this one over here, just like a toe thing, this is the design of the grouse, three toe like this, design that's more like that one there, but this one I don't know [diamond shape]. (1994a:1)

The hat and mitts lined with rabbit fur, are trimmed in wolf and fox fur respectively, and the moccasins are trimmed with beaver. Mrs. Tom decorated the hat with beadwork, but she explained that hats were not decorated when she was young (Tom 1994a:3).

Figure 5

Mittens (MOA #1637/1), hat (MOA #1637/2) and moccasins (MOA #1638/1ab)
made by Mrs. Tom



Photo by A. Cronin

IV. DOCUMENTATION PROCESS

i. Process, Time, and Cost of Gathering Existing Documentation

While this thesis documents Mrs. Tom's work, it has a secondary objective of documenting steps, costs and staff time invested in object documentation. Gathering the existing documentation on Mrs. Tom's work was straightforward. It took less than three days to find, read, and record pertinent information from this material. When calculating the time involved as an expense, this stage of my research cost six percent of the total expenditure (Figure 6).⁵

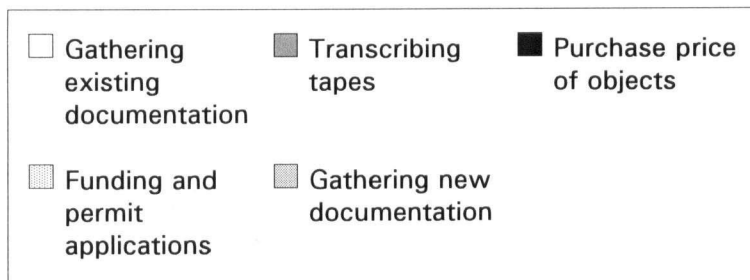
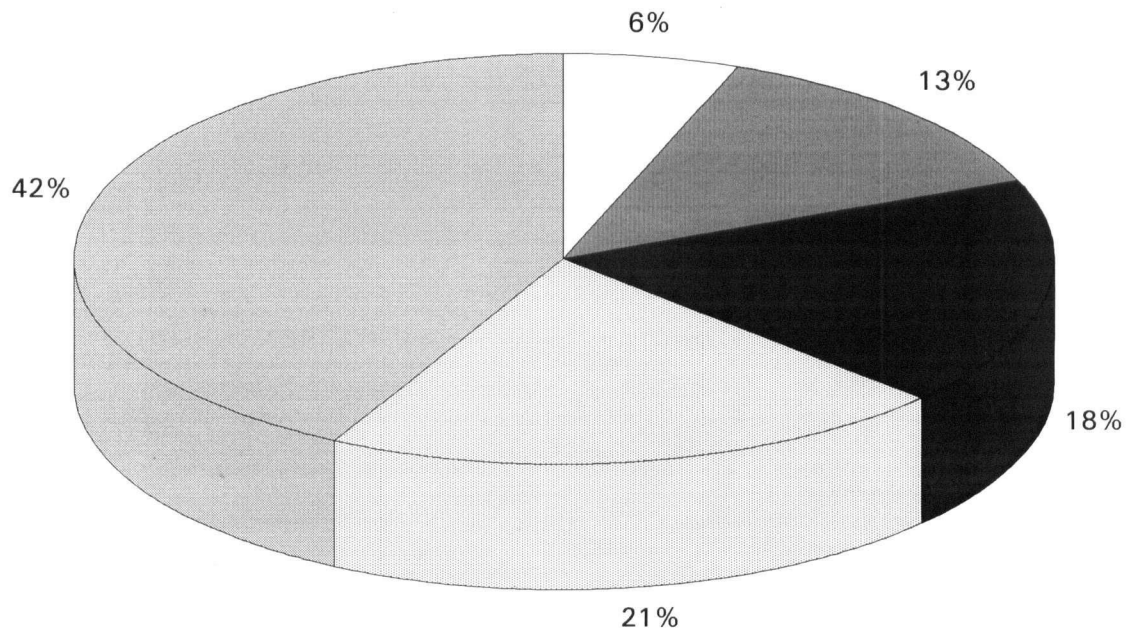
When I began my research, some transcripts of interviews with Mrs. Tom were already in the Museum's archives filed in the documentation file referred to as the "parallel accession file". The tape with the discussion about the 'shell' belt was in this file as well. The tape discussing the vest contains confidential information and Mrs. Tom did not give permission for it to reside in the Museum, but the transcript of the relevant parts was there. There was no note in the parallel accession file indicating that the two books written by Mrs. Tom existed, but I remembered that they had been catalogued into the Museum's library. I added a note to the file that indicated where the books could be found.

Julie Cruikshank told me about the exhibition proposal and a videotaped interview with Mrs. Tom, available from Northern Native Broadcasting (1992). I watched and transcribed the thirty minute videotape. Transcribing the tape took six hours.

⁵ Cost of times involved has been calculated at current museum rates.

Figure 6

Costs of the Documentation Process



ii. Process, Time, and Cost of Gathering New Documentation

During the winter of 1993-1994, I spoke several times with Mrs. Tom by telephone and she agreed to meet with me in July 1994 to document the work she was doing for the Museum. I decided to spend seven days in Whitehorse so that I could accommodate Mrs. Tom's busy schedule. Arranging transportation and accommodation in Whitehorse took no more than three hours.

I applied to the Northern Research Institute at Yukon College for a research fellowship to fund the trip, and to pay Mrs. Tom an honorarium for her time. I also applied internally to the Museum of Anthropology for a small grant to cover tapes, batteries and film, as well as money to create copies of the thesis that include colour photocopies, to return to Whitehorse.⁶ In addition, I applied to Yukon Tourism for a research permit. As I was working on this project for my Master's thesis at the University of British Columbia, I also had to apply to the University's Ethics Review board to ensure that my proposal met their standards. Applying for the funding, permits and ethics review was the single most time consuming aspect of the project. It took seventy-three hours, or twenty-one percent of the total cost of this research, for the preliminary paperwork and the project reports to be completed (Figure 6).

Documenting Mrs. Tom's objects resulted in three and a half hours of tape, compiled over the three days. Mrs. Tom and I spent one hour reviewing all the material from the tapes' transcripts. In order to enable Mrs. Tom to approve the tapes' contents before I left Whitehorse, I transcribed each days work, each night.

⁶ Copies of this thesis will go to Mrs. Tom, the Northern Research Institute, Yukon Archives, the Heritage Branch of Yukon Tourism, and the MacBride Museum.

By the fourth day, when we met to review the tapes' contents, I had rough notes to follow. On my return to Vancouver, I typed my notes into the computer, and finalized the transcripts. Altogether, I spent forty-five hours transcribing the material. The result was just over fifty pages of transcripts. When tallied as an expense, transcribing took up thirteen percent of the overall cost (Figure 6). In addition to the time I spent with Mrs. Tom in Whitehorse, I spent a morning in October 1994 with her in Vancouver, filling in the necessary paperwork and "Acquisitions Background Information" forms.

Not including the time it took to transcribe the tapes, I spent seventy-five hours documenting the objects. The direct cost to interview Mrs. Tom was approximately eighteen hundred dollars. This included airfare, hotel, per diem, honorarium, photography and supplies. Together, compiling the information on the objects and the field expenses cost forty-two percent of my overall expenditure (Figure 6).

iii. Characteristics of this Case Study

This case was simplified in that the objects were purchased directly from the maker. The project began when Mrs. Tom approached the Museum, wondering whether MOA would be interested in collecting some of her work. Mrs. Tom was also interested and willing to take the time to document her work. In cases, where museums acquire objects from more removed sources, there is often less information available.

This collection developed because Mrs. Tom and Julie Cruikshank had known each other for many years from working together in Whitehorse. As I was not familiar with the community or Mrs. Tom, and Julie Cruikshank was involved

in the project, she made the initial contacts. Gathering existing documentation was made easier in that both Mrs. Tom and Julie Cruikshank directed me to material about or involving Mrs. Tom. Because Mrs. Tom is a language specialist, she could translate relevant words into Northern Tutchone which greatly contributed to the documentation. The book she had written about place names, *My Country: Big Salmon River* (1987) made documentation easier. As I was transcribing tapes, I could refer to her book for the correct spelling of names.

Another advantage I discovered was that going to Whitehorse to talk with Mrs. Tom, also gave me a chance to meet community members and to explain both by informal discussions and through more formal forums, such as a radio interview, what I was working on for the Museum. Unfortunately, due to past methods of collecting, museums are sometimes treated with suspicion. By being in Whitehorse, I could explain to people how the project originated.

While in Whitehorse I also was able to spend time at the MacBride Museum and learn how they are documenting objects in their collection. The MacBride under the direction of Joanne Meehan, has implemented a programme with Ingrid Johnson where some of the objects in the collection are packed in travelling boxes and taken out into the community so elders can comment on the objects and any accompanying photographs. This enables elders to help document objects in the MacBride's collection.

V. DISCUSSION

i. What Does the Documentation Say About Mrs. Tom's Objects?

Reviewing the transcripts from Mrs. Tom's interviews, I realized that from one perspective, few of the topics we discussed were directly related to the objects she had made. Sewing provides a reflection of what life was like when Mrs. Tom was young and living in Big Salmon. While talking 'about' her objects, Mrs. Tom discusses education of children by parents, hard work, self-reliance, respect for elders, and sharing between people, all values she considers important.

When she discusses her gloves, for example, Mrs. Tom stresses what she has done, what she learned from her mother, and that she continues to use methods from the 1920's and 1930's and earlier. She also talks about how people used to live when she was young. She gives her descriptions ethnographic authority by stating, "That's how people used to do it" (Tom 1994b:1). Interspersed with the technical details of how she made the gloves, Mrs. Tom speaks about "...how people used to live a long time ago" (Tom 1994b:2). Her work provides the vehicle for explaining aspects of Northern Tutchone culture that are important to her. Her gloves are more than a piece of clothing, they represent many elements of Tutchone culture - hard work, self-reliance, respect and education.

Not only do Mrs. Tom's accounts reveal interesting information and insight into Tutchone culture and values, she also comments on such current issues as the effectiveness of museum programmes (Tom 1994b:6). She talked about one museum programme where she tried to teach children to do beadwork. She found it difficult that some of the children were not interested and that she had only 15-20

minutes to 'teach' them. She thought the programme would have been more successful if only interested children had participated (Tom 1994b:6-7).

While the objects were our focus, Mrs. Tom's comments ranged widely to other areas of her life. Therefore documenting objects by recording what the maker says about them can offer insight not only to the observable but also to other aspects of culture. Mrs. Tom's documentation is about ideas, not just objects.

ii. Is Thorough Documentation Relevant?

My case study confirms that there are many benefits from documenting collections through interviewing people associated with objects. For example, Mrs. Tom's comments responded to issues brought up by the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples (1992). The Task Force stresses that First Peoples need access to museum collections, and indicates that museums should provide basic information on objects and that museums should "...engage with living cultures,..." (1992:4,8). Museums are being asked to provide access to their existing collections and information about its scope and contents. These same questions should be asked of new acquisitions. A minimum amount of information included with objects should indicate names and uses, proveniences, and cultural origins. Mrs. Tom's documentation provides access not only to the objects, but also to the artist and to her perspective on Northern Tutchone cultural context. Current museology is focusing on the life-cycle of objects, acknowledging that there are many interpretations of objects and different voices to be heard within museums (Smith 1989:20). If museums are to concentrate on the life-cycle of objects they need to ensure that people who have made, owned and used them have recorded their relationships to the object.

The documentation also addresses the debate on objects versus ideas within museums. The inherent value of objects is being questioned as it is realized that the meaning and interpretation of objects is directed by individuals not the object and that museums may be better for exhibiting controversial concepts and ideas (Bott 1990:30). Mrs. Tom's documentation illustrates how ideas can be found in objects. Objects are not static, rather they have different messages depending on who is talking about them. Some museologists, "...recognize that meaning is not inherent in an object; rather, meaning is shaped by a wider context of interests and values that shifts with the conditions of the viewer" (Roberts 1994:153). Mrs. Tom's documentation reveals the ideas and interpretations associated with her objects, from her point of view. She, rather than the museum, becomes the authority on her objects.

iii. Is Thorough Documentation Attainable?

Thorough documentation of museum objects depends on many factors. The two most prominent appear to be time and money. As my case study shows, the documentation process proved to be time consuming, but much of the time was used to apply for funding to meet with Mrs. Tom. This time could be greatly reduced if there were museum sources for funds for gathering documentation, as well as objects. For my research, I had to apply to external sources to receive funding for the documentation process, including an honorarium for Mrs. Tom's time. If museums value this kind of documentation, the price of the object becomes the object plus the cost to document the piece with the maker. The processing time for transcribing the tapes was also high. Although it is time consuming, museums must take it into consideration when identifying priorities if objects are to be thoroughly documented.

Object documentation has direct implications for collections management. Having objects' makers document their own work addresses a number of issues in collections management. A common complaint about research on collections is that there is not enough information to work with. The information gathered from Mrs. Tom means that anyone working with her objects will not only have information on the technical aspects of the objects, but also about Northern Tutchone culture and about Mrs. Tom.

During the time I spent with Mrs. Tom I gathered information in two different ways. In one instance, I had a list of specific questions about the gloves she had made. The questions, from the Museum's "Acquisitions Background Information" form (Appendix A), cover a variety of topics including materials, manufacturing techniques, object history, usage, symbolism, and information about the maker and collector. The answers to these questions provide good, basic documentation on the gloves. In the second instance, I asked Mrs. Tom to tell me about her objects. In this way, Mrs. Tom was free to express what she thought was important. In some cases her documentation overlapped with questions from the form, but at other times her documentation went beyond the obvious. By having Mrs. Tom tell me what she thought was important, topics were raised that I could not have anticipated because the associations between the information and her objects were not self-evident. These two complementary approaches resulted in Mrs. Tom's objects being thoroughly documented.

Thorough documentation by maker, could have other implications for collections management as well. Documentation, as I have illustrated it, requires more time and money per object than is needed to simply record skeletal information on objects. Therefore, thorough documentation means fewer objects

could be acquired per year and this would help combat increasing collections management costs. The cost of managing large, undocumented collections is being called into question as financial restraint within museums becomes necessary (Ames 1992). The cost of looking after smaller, documented collections is more economical and a better use of museums limited funds. Perhaps museums with acquisition budgets need to commit money for gathering information, not just objects. If they did this, museums could substantially reduce the number of annual acquisitions.

Museums with acquisition budgets for ethnographic material must question whether or not they are using their budget efficiently. To be spending a yearly budget on objects that are not well documented does not seem as efficient as if a yearly budget were spent on fewer thoroughly documented, objects. What is more important, to increase the size of museums' collections or to increase the worth of the collection through documentation?

Better documented collections are possible, but only if museums are willing to commit time and funds to the documentation, not just the objects. If museums are to continue to collect, they must document what they collect so future collections are not in the poor shape collections now are in. Museums must collect in a much more conscientious and limited manner.

VI. CONCLUSION

Despite questions about the continuing role of objects in museums, museums continue to collect. Even with the future of museums collections unclear amid

repatriation requests, it is unlikely collections will disappear. Museums still need to focus on how they can effectively combine people, ideas and objects.

The UBC Museum of Anthropology's collection of Mrs. Gertie Tom's work illustrates how documentation has a place in these discussions. By providing her own documentation of her own work, Mrs. Tom is helping to address one of the common complaints about museum collections; that they are inadequately documented.

The documentation process is time consuming and depends at the very least, on money for travel and honoraria. Time and cost are limiting factors, but they may work in favor of collections management. The cost of managing collections is being called into question. Perhaps museums with acquisition budgets, should consider using a small portion of the budget to purchase objects, and a large portion of the budget to 'purchase' the associated information. The result would be that museums would accept less objects, but they would be well documented, and therefore more meaningful.

Museum professionals are also questioning where objects fit within museums and whether ideas should have a greater visibility than objects. Perhaps it is time to remember that objects can be more than just things. Museums should be as much about people and ideas, as they are about objects. But if museums keep up their current collecting practices, they will exacerbate current problems involved in looking after poorly documented collections. To collect fewer objects and to increase documentation will open up new ideas and possibilities.

Originating people are also questioning the role of museums. They are demanding that museums be able to release information on their objects and that museums include living people. Again, Mrs. Tom's documentation meets both of these objectives. The information Mrs. Tom provides humanizes and personalizes her work. It might be more worthwhile for museums to concentrate on purchasing objects from people who can add documentation rather than spending money on objects that because of the lack of documentation on them, become objects for objects sake, rather than the basis for thought.

Weil discusses policies surrounding the opinion that museums should not collect objects they cannot properly preserve (1990:58). In talking about this he says:

[Museums] can no longer (if they ever could) afford to look after boundless agglomerations of objects acquired for no better reason than that they became available. The careful shaping of a collection intended for a mission-driven use requires a more considered balance between the collection that is assembled and the museum's ability to provide that collection with a proper level of care. (Weil 1990:59)

Taking this one step further, my recommendation is that museums no longer accept objects they cannot document. Specific questions about objects should be answered and in addition, time should be taken to listen and hear what the maker, owner, or collector has to say about his or her relationship to the object and what he or she wants the museum and its audience to know in relation to the object - the results may be surprising.

The future of museums depends on using both ideas and objects thoughtfully and in moderation. There is no need to collect every object to be had, rather museums should collect some objects, and as much documentation as possible. It is

people who created all the objects in the first place, and it is only people who can bring the ideas behind the objects to life.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ames, Michael M.
1992 *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums*.
Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Ames, Michael M., Julia Harrison and Trudy Nicks
1988 "Proposed Museum Policies for Ethnological Collections and the People they Represent" in *Muse*, October, VI(3):47-57.
- Babcock, Barbara
1986 "Modeled Selves: Helen Cordero's "Little People"". Pp. 316-343 in *The Anthropology of Experience*. Victor W. Turner and Edward M. Bruner, eds. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Bandes, Susan J.
1984 "Caring for Collections: Strategies for Conservation and Documentation" in *Museum News*, October, 68-71.
- Bloom, Joel
1993 "Response and Responsibility" in *Museums News*, September/October, 72(5):48-49.
- Bott, Val
1990 "Beyond the Museum" in *Museums Journal*, February, 90(2):28-30.
- Cantwell, Anne-Marie, James B. Griffin and Nan A. Rothschild, eds.
1981 *The Research Potential of Anthropological Museum Collections* in The Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 376. New York: The New York Academy of Sciences.
- Carnegie, Elizabeth
1994 "Natural Creation" in *Museums Journal*, September, 94(9):32-33.
- Carter, John
1994 "Museums and Indigenous peoples in Canada". Pp. 213-226 in *Museums and the Appropriation of Culture*. Susan Pearce, ed. London: The Athlone Press.
- Clifford, James
1991 "Four Northwest Coast Museums: Travel Reflections". Pp. 212-254 in *Exhibiting Cultures, The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, eds. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Cole, Douglas
1985 *Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts*. Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre.
- Collier, Donald and Harry Tschopik Jr.
1954 "The Role of Museums in American Anthropology" in *American Anthropologist* 56:768-79.

Council of Australian Museum Associations

1992 *Policies for Museums in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People* Draft (August 1992):1-19.

Cruikshank, Julie

1990 *Life Lived Like a Story*. U.S.A.: University of Nebraska Press.

1992 *Weaving Words, Sewing Stories: The work of Gertie Tom*. Unpublished proposal for a planning grant for a small traveling exhibit. September 12, 1992, Vancouver: UBC Museum of Anthropology.

Davies, Adriana A, ed.

1990 *Standard Practices Handbook for Museums*. Edmonton: Alberta Museums Association.

Davies, Maurice

1994a "Editorial - Sex, politics and religion" in *Museums Journal*, February, 94(2):7.

1994b "Editorial - There is a place for imaginative object-rich displays" in *Museums Journal*, September, 94(9):7.

Davies, Stuart

1994 "Back to Basics:II" in *Museums Journal*, September, 94(9):20-22.

Done, Stephen

1994 "Romanian Tears" in *Museums Journal*, September 94(9):31.

Fenton, William

1960 "The Museum and Anthropological Research" in *Curator* 3(4):327-335.

Freeman, June

1990 "The Crafts as Poor Relations" in *Oral History* 18(2):24-32.

Furst, Hans Jorg

1989 "Material Culture Research and the Curation Process". Pp. 97-110 in *Museum Studies in Material Culture*. Susan Pearce, ed. London: Leicester University Press.

Hall, Judy

1983 "Canadian Ethnology Service" in *American Indian Art Magazine*, Winter, 9(1):50-59.

Hill, Tom and Trudy Nicks

1992 "The Task Force on Museums and First Peoples" in *Muse* X(2-3):81-84.

Houlihan, Patrick T.

1991 "The Poetic Image and Native American Art". pp. 205-211 in *Exhibiting Cultures, The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, eds. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Hull, Karen

1994 "A Way Through the Fog" in *Museums Journal*, August, 94(8):25-26.

- Karp, Ivan, Christine Mullen Kreamer and Steven D. Lavine, eds.
1992 *Museums and Communities, The Politics of Public Culture*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Karp, Ivan and Steven D. Lavine
1991 *Exhibiting Cultures, The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Kopytoff, Igor
1986 "The Cultural Biography of Things: commoditization as process". Pp. 64-91 in *The Social Life of Things, Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Arjun Appadurai, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ljungstrom, Asa
1989 "Artefacts-Key to the Past: Narratives from a Craft Inventory in *Scandinavian Yearbook of Folklore* 45:51-71.
- Lochnan, Katharine A.
1983 "The Research Function as Philosopher's Stone" in *Muse*, Autumn, I(3):16,18-20.
- Lumley, Robert, ed.
1988 *The Museum Time-Machine*. London: Routledge.
- McClellan, Catharine
1981 "Tutchone" Pp. 493-505 in *Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 6:Subarctic*. June Helm, ed. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- 1987 *Part of the Land, Part of the Water A History of the Yukon Indians*. Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre.
- McGillivray, W. Bruce
1991 "Museum Research: Axiom or Oxymoron?" in *Muse*, Summer/Fall, 9(2):62-66.
- McLendon, Sally
1981 "Preparing Museum Collections for Use as Primary data in Ethnographic Research" Pp. 201-227 in *The Research Potential of Anthropological Museum Collections in The Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 376. Cantwell, Anne-Marie, James B. Griffin and Nan A. Rothschild, eds. New York: The New York Academy of Sciences.
- Moore, Kevin and David Tucker
1994 "Back to Basics" in *Museums Journal*, July, 94(7):22.
- Mori, John and Joycelyn Mori
1972 "Revising Our Conceptions of Museum Research" in *Curator* 15(3):189-199.
- Nason, James D.
1987 "The Determination of Significance: Curatorial research and private collections". Pp. 31-67 in *Material Anthropology: Contemporary Approaches to Material Culture*. Barrie Reynolds and Margaret A. Stott, eds. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Northern Native Broadcasting

- 1992 "Da'Dan" - *Our People*. Television interview with Mrs. Gertie Tom. 28:30 minutes. Spring 1992. Whitehorse, Yukon: Northern Native Broadcasting.

Parezo, Nancy J.

- 1987 "The Formation of Ethnographic Collections: The Smithsonian Institution in the American Southwest". Pp. 1-47 in *Advances in Anthropological Method and Theory* vol. 10. Michael Schiffler, ed. New York: Academic Press.

Resnicow, David

- 1994 "What is Watkins Really Asking?" in *Curator* 37(3):150-151.

Reynolds, Barrie

- 1989 "Museums of anthropology as centres of information". Pp. 111-118 in *Museum Studies in Material Culture*. Susan Pearce, ed. London: Leicester University Press.

Reynolds, Barrie and Margaret A. Stott, eds.

- 1987 *Material Anthropology: Contemporary Approaches to Material Culture*. Lanham: University Press of America.

Ridington, Robin

- 1982 "Technology, Worldview and Adaptive Strategy in a Northern Hunting Society" in *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 19(4):469-481.

Roberts, Lisa

- 1994 "Rebuttal to 'Are Museums Still Necessary?'" in *Curator* 37(3):152-155.

Smith, Charles Saumarez

- 1989 "Museums, Artefacts, and Meanings". Pp. 6-21 in *The New Museology*. Peter Vergo, ed. London: Reaktion Books Ltd.

Stott, Margaret A. and Barrie Reynolds

- 1987 "Material Anthropology: Contemporary Approaches to Material Culture". Pp. 1-11 in *Material Anthropology: Contemporary Approaches to Material Culture*. B. Reynolds and M. Stott, eds. Lanham: University Press of America.

Sturtevant, William C.

- 1969 "Does Anthropology Need Museums?" from *Proceedings of the Biological Society* 82:619-649.

Task Force on Museums and First Peoples

- 1992 *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples*. Ottawa: A Report jointly sponsored by the Assembly of First Nations and the Canadian Museums Association.

Tom, Gertie

- 1981 *Dùts'um Edhó Ts'ètsi Yu Dän K'í, How to Tan Hides in the Native Way*. Whitehorse: Council for Yukon Indians.

Tom, Gertie, cont.

1987 *Ekeyi: Gyò Cho Chú, My Country: Big Salmon River*. Whitehorse: Yukon Native Language Centre.

1992a Transcript of tape recording of interview by Julie Cruikshank, 25 June 1992, Whitehorse, Yukon in *Parallel Accession File 1563*. Vancouver, B.C.: University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology Archives.

1992b Transcript of tape recording of interview by Julie Cruikshank, 7 July 1992, Whitehorse, Yukon in *Parallel Accession File 1563*. Vancouver, B.C.: University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology Archives.

1994a Transcript of tape recording of interview by Allison Cronin, 8 July 1994, Whitehorse, Yukon in *Parallel Accession File 1636*. Vancouver, B.C.: University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology Archives.

1994b Transcript of tape recording of interview by Allison Cronin, 11 July 1994, Whitehorse, Yukon in *Parallel Accession File 1636*. Vancouver, B.C.: University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology Archives.

1994c Transcript of tape recording of interview by Allison Cronin, 12 July 1994, Whitehorse, Yukon in *Parallel Accession File 1636*. Vancouver, B.C.: University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology Archives.

1994d Personal communication. October 13, 1994.

van Mensch, Peter

1990 "Methodological museology; or, towards a theory of museum practice". Pp. 141-157 in *Objects of Knowledge*. Susan Pearce, ed. London: The Athlone Press.

Vergo, Peter

1989 "Introduction". Pp. 1-5 in *The New Museology*. Peter Vergo, ed. London: Reaktion Books.

Watkins, Charles Alan

1994 "Are Museums Still Necessary?" in *Curator* 37(1):25-35.

Webster, Laurie

1990 "Altered States: Documenting Changes in Anthropology Research Collections" in *Curator* 33(2):130-160.

Weil, Stephen

1989 "The Proper Business of the Museum: Ideas or Things?" in *Muse*, Spring, 28-32.

APPENDIX A

The UBC Museum of Anthropology's "Acquisitions Background Information" Form

July, 1994

UBC Museum of Anthropology
Acquisitions Background Information

Accession No. _____ Date _____

Object Name: _____

Name in original language: _____

Maker of object (name and information): _____

Gender of maker: _____

Materials: _____

Materials in original language: _____

Techniques of manufacture: _____

Date of manufacture: _____

Usage (by whom, in what context, for what purpose): _____

Specific history of this object (made for whom, used in what situations): _____

Ownership History: _____

Associated Objects: _____

Symbolism (significance motifs, colour, shape, etc; associated mythology): _____

Culture of origin: _____

Place of origin: (general and specific): _____

Place collected: _____

Date collected: _____

Collector:(name and information): _____

Relevant books, notes, photographs, etc.: _____

Additional comments: _____

Source of information: _____

Interviewed by: _____