

Hands-On Access to Text-Based Objects for Visitors in Museums, Archives, and Libraries

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**To the Faculty of The University of the Arts**

The members of the committee appointed to examine the thesis of Leah Comiskey find it satisfactory and recommend it to be accepted.

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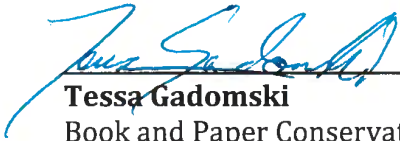
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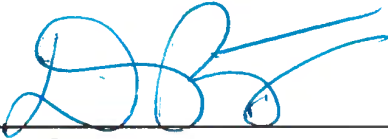


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## **Abstract**

Text-based objects such as books, letters, manuscripts, and other documents of historical significance are housed in museums, libraries, and archives. These artifacts carry powerful narratives about people and events of the past but, when placed within an exhibition context, they present a challenge to professionals wishing to engage the general public with meaningful interpretive tools that extend beyond traditional text labels. One way of addressing this issue is to provide supplementary programming that allows the public to handle select objects that are representative of the collection. Differing approaches towards visitor access and object preservation guide an institution's decision of whether or not to offer such an experience to its visitors.

The research for this thesis consists of a survey of professionals in museums, libraries, and archives designed to gauge both departmental and institutional attitudes towards granting the general public manual access to objects in their collections. An analysis of the gathered responses identifies emergent trends among institutions and professionals: libraries and archives are more likely than museums to allow the public to handle objects and the education and public programming community is least likely to support this kind of access. Additionally, the research includes an in-depth case study of the Hands-On Tour offered by the Rosenbach Museum and Library of Philadelphia. Comprised of an interview with the one of the program's co-creators and a survey of visitors who have participated in the tour, this portion of the study examines both the process and rationale for the program's implementation and the motivations and experiences of its participants. Visitors are motivated by a range of expectations including positive social engagement, cognitive insight, increased access, and a sense of connection to the past. As reported by survey participants, these expectations were not met in some categories while exceeded in others.

## Dedication

To my mother, whose unconditional support has enabled me to take risks and to pursue my passions

*and*

to Nana, whose unwavering belief in my capabilities carried me through every challenge and allowed me to flourish

*and*

to Will, whose kind heart, unending curiosity, and perfect sense of humor will forever inspire me.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Helen Shannon, for her expert guidance throughout this process. Her practical advice kept me grounded, while still ensuring that this project would reach a meaningful conclusion. Additionally, I wish to express my gratitude for my committee members who so generously shared their time and expertise.

As this thesis developed from a vague idea into a completed project, I have been fortunate to develop my argument in conversation with many generous and knowledgeable individuals. Additional thanks to Erin Malkowski, Tara O'Brien, Cary Hutto of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Nick Herman and Ian Bogus of the University of Pennsylvania, and Jordan Rockford of the University of the Arts, all of whom were willing to share their thoughts and experiences with me.

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## Nomenclature

*Museum* – an institution that preserves and exhibits historically and culturally significant objects in an environment that facilitates meaningful connections with curated content for public audiences.

*Library* – as defined by George M. Eberhart, senior editor of *American Libraries*, “[a] library is a collection of resources in a variety of formats that is (1) organized by information professionals or other experts who (2) provide convenient physical, digital, bibliographic, or intellectual access and (3) offer targeted services and programs (4) with the mission of educating, informing, or entertaining a variety of audiences (5) and the goal of stimulating individual learning and advancing society as a whole.”<sup>1</sup>

*Archive* – as defined by Joan M. Reitz in the *Dictionary for Library and Information Science*, “an organized collection of the noncurrent records of the activities of a business, government, organization, institution, or other corporate body, or the personal papers of one or more individuals, families, or groups, retained permanently (or for a designated or indeterminate period of time) by their originator or a successor for their permanent historical, informational, evidential, legal, administrative, or monetary value, usually in a repository managed and maintained by a trained archivist.”<sup>2</sup>

*Public* – non-expert, adult audiences with general knowledge of an institution’s collection.

*Hands-on experience* – as described by Elizabeth Wood and Kiersten F. Latham, “the lived experience of making physical contact using one’s own haptic senses with a real physical thing.”<sup>3</sup> In other words, an encounter with an object from an institution’s collection that enables the visitor to process the sensations of object-handling as the experience is occurring.

*Text-based object* – alternatively “text-based artifacts,” are vehicles for written communication i.e. books, letters, manuscripts, and other documents of historical significance. Value is determined by the verbal information recorded within, the evidence of material construction, the traces of past use that are unique to the object, rarity and historical context.

*Damage* – a change in the condition of an object that is considered undesirable.

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<sup>1</sup> George M. Eberhart, *The Librarian’s Book of Lists*, (Chicago: American Library Association, 2010), 12.

<sup>2</sup> Joan M. Reitz, *Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science*, accessed December 11, 2017, [http://www.abc-clio.com/ODLIS/odlis\\_a.aspx](http://www.abc-clio.com/ODLIS/odlis_a.aspx).

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Wood and Kiersten F. Latham, “The Thickness of Things: Exploring the Curriculum of Museums through Phenomenological Touch,” *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* 27, no. 2 (2011): 57.

*Access* – the spectrum of a visitor’s opportunity to intellectually, emotionally, physically, and/or spiritually engage with a collection as enabled by the removal or reduction of institutional barriers.

*Preservation*– though often used interchangeably, preservation and conservation are two distinct terms. As defined by the American Institute for Conservation (AIC), preservation is an umbrella term that refers to “[t]he protection of cultural property through activities that minimize chemical and physical deterioration and damage and that prevent loss of informational content. The primary goal of preservation is to prolong the existence of cultural property.”<sup>4</sup>

*Conservation* – a broad term, as defined by AIC, “[t]he profession devoted to the preservation of cultural property for the future. Conservation activities include examination, documentation, treatment, and preventive care, supported by research and education.”<sup>5</sup>

*Preventive Conservation* – a specific approach to conservation, as defined by AIC, “[t]he mitigation of deterioration and damage to cultural property through the formulation and implementation of policies and procedures for the following: appropriate environmental conditions; handling and maintenance procedures for storage, exhibition, packing, transport, and use; integrated pest management; emergency preparedness and response; and reformatting/duplication.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> “Definitions of Conservation Terminology,” American Institute for Conservation, accessed November 14, 2017, <http://www.conservation-us.org/about-conservation/definitions#.WgupjhOPKCQ>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter I: Introduction

The museum is difficult to define and its current iteration is the result of many historic transformations. The origin of modern museums has its basis in the votive offerings placed in Greek and Roman temples and, in later stages, the private collections of wealthy individuals. The public, so central to the definition of the museum today, was not welcomed—let alone served by—these collections until the late seventeenth century.<sup>7</sup> In 1753, the British Parliament voted to establish history's first national museum based on the collections and library of Sir Hans Sloane. Parliament raised public funds to acquire this and two other private collections to form the British Museum: "a national establishment founded by the Authority of Parliament, chiefly designed for the use of learned and studious men, both natives and foreigners, in their researches into the several parts of knowledge."<sup>8</sup> Though the collection served the public in name, access to the museum was restricted to those who submitted a written request for a guided tour. Applicants were required to wait for weeks for a response.

Into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, however, museums have become institutions that are positioned as agents of public service and community engagement. In addition to providing visitors with opportunities for education and enrichment, the museum performs object stewardship as one of its chief functions. The modern museum seeks to ensure that the objects in its collection are maintained in good condition and protected from potential harm. Scientific advancement allowed the field of conservation to evolve over the course of the twentieth century and museum professionals now have the

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<sup>7</sup> Edward P. Alexander and Mary Alexander, *Museums in Motion*, (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2008), 7.

<sup>8</sup> Germain Bazin, *The Museum Age*, (New York: Universe Books, 1967), 146-147.

knowledge to prevent or slow the process of deterioration.<sup>9</sup> Collections management staff assess and manage risks to collections so that they may continue to exist for future generations.

At times, a museum's commitment to access can be thought to conflict with the responsibilities of object stewardship. Merely taking an object out of storage for an exhibition poses a host of potential threats to its existence as it is exposed to light, changes in climate, and excessive handling. Museums must determine if the value of an object's use, in whatever form that may take, outweighs the attendant risks. In this current era of museum history, this judgement is ultimately determined by the value an organization places on the visitor's experience paired with an assessment of the object's condition. Collections of text-based objects—rare books, manuscripts, and historic letters—are unique in that they are often housed in institutions outside of the museum. Museums, libraries, and archives share a commitment to public access but manage the use of their collections in distinctly different ways.

Libraries and archives, like museums, exist to provide educational services to their audiences but differ in the nature of their collections and are guided by different understandings of access and audience. As a result, the protocol for use vary by repository. Regardless of their area of expertise, many librarians accept Dr. S. R. Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science as the profession's philosophical foundation. The first of these laws is Ranganathan's assertion, "Books are for use."<sup>10</sup> Public libraries allow their community of

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<sup>9</sup> Edward P. Alexander and Mary Alexander, *Museums in Motion*, (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2008), 217-218.

<sup>10</sup> S. R. Ranganathan, *The Five Laws of Library Science*, (Madras: The Madras Library Association 1931), 1, [https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.\\$b99721](https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.$b99721).

users to access a wide range of materials on site, via the internet, or by lending them out for at home use. Academic libraries are affiliated with educational institutions and exist to support the research needs of faculty and students.<sup>11</sup> Research libraries, by comparison, house collections that are comprehensive enough to support use by scholars in specialized fields.<sup>12</sup> Special collections libraries represent yet another category of repository. Special collections often exist within larger institutions and may contain manuscripts, letters, and other documents that are especially fragile, valuable, or rare.<sup>13</sup> Hybrid institutions, such as presidential libraries and museums, create exhibitions for the general public while providing services and facilities for researchers. Archives are distinct from libraries because they collect and organize unpublished records that document the actions of individuals as well as corporate, institutional, and government bodies.<sup>14</sup> To varying degrees, all of these institutions adopt guidelines that ensure the protection of these items against damage or theft that may include the mandatory registration of researchers, the use of gloves, the prohibition of food and drink, and various heightened security measures.

In museum environments, the public's typical mode of engagement with text-based objects is subject to further restrictions. Visitors are rarely, if ever, granted visual access to the museum's entire collection of text-based objects. Often, only a small number of objects from these collections is displayed in temporary exhibitions. Additionally, when a visitor encounters a book or manuscript within the context of a curated museum display, she

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<sup>11</sup> Joan M. Reitz, *Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science*, accessed December 11, 2017, [http://www.abc-clio.com/ODLIS/odlis\\_a.aspx](http://www.abc-clio.com/ODLIS/odlis_a.aspx).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

experiences text in a way that diverges from her ordinary approach towards writing on a page. The act of reading is typically performed as a solitary endeavor but is reconstructed as a shared experience in a museum setting. The static display of the object presents yet another deviation from standard reading practice. When placed within a glass case, the book's objectness is given prominence and the act of looking is emphasized over the act of reading. Given this unique suite of conditions, museum professionals are challenged to invent strategies for engagement that are specifically tailored to the placement of text-based objects within exhibition settings.

"The beige rectangle problem,"<sup>15</sup> as one museum educator termed it, continues to frustrate professionals in the field. How can museums better encourage and support the public's engagement with the text-based objects in their collections? One possible method of addressing this issue is to enable a more direct experience with the object by allowing visitors to touch historic documents. The Hands-On Tour (HOT) for museum visitors offered by the Rosenbach Museum and Library in Philadelphia serves as an example of a program that facilitates this kind of experience. During these events, visitors are presented with a small number of objects—primarily rare books, manuscripts, and letters—from the collection that are representative of a selected theme or genre. Participants are invited to manually examine these objects as a staff member leads a discussion about the object's material and intellectual components.

This thesis addresses research questions in three areas: first, how do literary museums, archives, and libraries negotiate visitor access to objects in their collections while maintaining the preservation of those objects?; second, how and why has the

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<sup>15</sup> Michael Madeja, "Client Presentations," (presentation, Museum Audience, The University of the Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, September 6, 2016).

Rosenbach Museum and Library implemented a program for allowing the public to handle select objects from the collection?; and third, what motivates participation in HOT and how do visitors describe the experience of touching an object? This analysis has found that, across various types of institutions, hands-on access for the general public is more widely allowed than the researcher had initially assumed. Further, in the case of the public program offered by the Rosenbach, visitors tend to understand touch not as valuable in and of itself but as a means to achieve a number of beneficial outcomes.

The research for this thesis consists of an in-depth case study of the Rosenbach Museum's Hands-On Tour. This case study is comprised of a semi-structured interview with one of the founders of the program, Judy Guston, (see Appendix B) as well as an online survey distributed to all Hands-On Tour participants in the last two years (see Appendix A). The first component will give a sense of how the program was developed and has changed over time and will uncover the rationale behind the museum's approach to tactile access. The second component will reveal the motivations of those attending this program and their post-visit assessments of what they have gained from the opportunity to handle collections objects. By comparing the data gathered from both of these components, we may measure the successes and failures of this program as a model for other institutions who may wish to follow suit. In addition to this case study, an online survey was distributed to professionals in a range of departments working in literary museums, archives, and libraries. The questionnaire was designed to determine trends in the attitudes of professionals towards the hands-on access to historic, text-based objects for the general public (see Appendix C).



## **Chapter II: Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

The literature review will provide a historical and theoretical backdrop for the various approaches towards access to and preservation of text-based objects within museums, libraries, and archives. First, the review will address the concept of authenticity. The value placed on gaining proximity to what is colloquially referred to as “the real thing” is a major motivation for visitors to these collections; however, the continued existence of these rare or unique objects is protected by enforcing limitations on public access. Second, the review will cover developments in the theory and practice of preservation. This portion of the review will begin with a discussion of the term “access” as it appears in the standards that guide preservation work and will address the history of the field as it developed separately in museums, libraries, and archives. Third, the review will explore issues related to the experiences of visitors in museums. This portion of the review will provide an understanding of what it means to access cultural artifacts intellectually, emotionally, and physically. The final segment of the review will develop a physiological and philosophical understanding of the sense of touch and address changing attitudes towards its use in the museum. In summary, this analysis of the literature will provide a framework for understanding the issues that professionals face, across departments and institutions, when designing impactful experiences with text-based objects for public audiences.

### **Authenticity**

Authenticity, a quality attributed to the text-based artifacts found in museums, special collection libraries, and archives, is to be preserved as well as to be experienced.

Authenticity confers value because an authentic object is typically rare or even irreplaceable. In his seminal essay on the effects of modernity on the perception of art, Walter Benjamin argues that the advent of mechanical reproduction has enabled the death of the aura— “a strange tissue of space and time: the unique apparition of a distance, however near it may be. To follow with the eye—while resting on a summer afternoon—a mountain range on the horizon or a branch that casts its shadow on the beholder is to breathe the aura of those mountains, of that branch.”<sup>16</sup> Benjamin’s essay was written in reaction to the effects of film and photography on the concept of authenticity, as perceived by the eye, but the technology of digital reproduction has further democratized access and called into question notions of the existence and value of authenticity. As described by Benjamin, the mystical qualities of the aura are bound up in the notion of authenticity. An authentic work of art may project an aura only if it occupies a singular presence in time and space. Benjamin argues that authenticity cannot be reproduced and that, if an original work of art *is* reproduced (i.e. an ink jet poster of an oil painting), it forfeits its uniqueness. Benjamin argues that this is a positive state of affairs because the destruction of the aura ultimately frees art from its connections to a reactionary tradition that serves a political function.

Benjamin links the aura with a negative conceptualization of ritual. The cultish worship of the original work of art is, to Benjamin’s mind, a means of upholding existing power structures as the mitigators of aesthetic value and experience. Historically, access to original works of art was restricted to those of wealth and status. However, the ability to

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<sup>16</sup> Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility: Second Version,” in *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility and Other Writings on Media*, edited by Michael W. Jennings, Brigid Doherty, and Thomas Y. Levin, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 23.

create a reproduction allows a viewer to experience a work of art in more personally meaningful contexts or, in some cases, to assert ownership of a piece via facsimile or print. The researcher would argue, however, that experiences with text-based artifacts are valuable to the public not only because they enable them to connect with the author but also because they draw them into a history of past use. Via direct handling, the user of a text may re-enact the experience of untold numbers of people throughout history.

Benjamin describes the emergence of the popular desire for contact with cultural objects and the influence of this impulse on contemporary life: “Namely, the desire of contemporary masses to bring things ‘closer’ spatially and humanly, which is just as ardent as their bent toward overcoming the uniqueness of every reality by accepting its reproduction. Every day the urge grows stronger to get hold of an object at very close range by way of its likeness, its reproduction.”<sup>17</sup> Benjamin is essentially advocating for the use of facsimiles. Notably, this passage is the only point in the essay that Benjamin discusses the desire to hold an original object. Touch, in this instance, is a means of achieving ownership rather than a mode of sophisticated perception. Elsewhere, however, Benjamin does not address the possibility of perceiving an original object’s aura via any sense other than sight. The researcher believes this bias towards the visual apprehension of the aura omits additional modes of perception, namely that of touch.

With the goal of increasing access to their text-based collections, museums, libraries, and archives produce digital facsimiles of original objects. Jasmine Elizabeth Burns, Visual Resources Metadata Librarian at Cornell University, addresses the subject of authenticity with regards to facsimile versions of medieval manuscripts in her 2014 study of the effects

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 24.

of digitization on traditional modes of engagement with archival objects. Burns begins by acknowledging that digital surrogates allow for wider access but tempers this assertion by noting a number of issues that arise from digitization. She uses the 2012-2013 *Crossing Borders: Manuscripts from the Bodleian Library* exhibit at the Jewish Museum in New York as a case study to examine the effectiveness of digital media for interpretation of the textual objects on display. Touch screens that allowed visitors to virtually page through the actual artifacts on display were placed among the cases in the gallery. Burns notes that she observed visitors spent more time with the objects than with the touch screens. While this seems plausible to the researcher, Burns does not cite collected data to support to this claim.

Burns argues that the product of digitization disallows the analysis of the unique mark of time upon an object. Further, "in interacting with a manuscript, the modern user witnesses the labor of creation as well as the subsequent history of use that is predicated on the particular details of manufacture. The book therefore projects the physical presence of its creator(s) and highlights the numerous human connections to the object."<sup>18</sup> The researcher agrees that, by interacting with authentic objects, visitors to these collections are better equipped to understand the myriad ways in which people have created, bought, sold, used, and re-purposed these objects over time. However, this researcher believes that tactile experiences are a more effective means of enabling this understanding.

In a 2015 paper, Kiersten Latham, associate professor in the School of Information at Kent State, reported her findings concerning the question of how visitors to museums

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<sup>18</sup> Jasmine Elizabeth Burns, "Digital Facsimiles and the Modern Viewer: Medieval Manuscripts and Archival Practice in the Age of New Media," *Art Documentation: Bulletin Of The Art Libraries Society Of North America* 33, no. 2, (2014): 150.

experience what is commonly referred to as “the real thing” (TRT) in the digital age. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis as her research methodology, Latham analyzed data generated from intensive, semi-structured interviews with 21 visitors from 5 museums. Latham began each interview with the prompt: “Walk me through your visit to \_\_\_\_ exhibit.”<sup>19</sup> Visitors were asked to focus their interpretation with further questions: “What does ‘the real thing’ mean to you? What if museums went completely online? or If you could have done anything you wanted to do with the [name of object], is there anything you would have done?”<sup>20</sup> Latham detected and defined four emergent themes that describe how visitors understand their experiences with authentic artifacts in museums:

- (1) Self: TRT is experienced through aspects of myself.
- (2) Relation: TRT is experienced by connecting me to other people (beings), events, times, and things.
- (3) Presence: TRT is an actual physical thing that was there and is right here in front of me now.
- (4) Surround: TRT is experienced in the way it is presented to me and by what surrounds me (and it).<sup>21</sup>

Latham explains that, while distinct, these emergent themes are not impermeable.<sup>22</sup> At times, the accounts provided by the study’s participants described an overlapping of two or more of these themes.

The theme Self is explained as those experiences that are understood

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<sup>19</sup> Kiersten Latham, “What is the Real Thing in the Museum?,” *Museum Management and Curatorship* 30, no. 1 (2015): 4.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 6.

through elements of an individual's personal experiences, memories, interests, knowledge, or imagination. As one participant stated, seeing the real thing inspired her "because somebody could do something like that, a human being can do that, it gives you hope about yourself that you can be stretched."<sup>23</sup> The theme Relation refers to a way of understanding the experiences of others. Responses in this category associated TRT with the individuals who may have used it in the past, created it, or were responsible for placing it in the museum.<sup>24</sup> Latham explains that Presence includes those experiences that are marked by an awareness that an artifact is, in fact, actually there. Discussing a perfume bottle in an exhibit on the Titanic, a visitor remarked, "It was really there at this moment in history that we've all heard about, that you can study, you can watch movies about, and can read about ... and the real thing – this was there. This was part of it."<sup>25</sup> Finally, the theme Surround includes experiences during which visitors were aware of the impact of their environmental surroundings.<sup>26</sup> Her study is important because it underlines the fact that museum visitors both encounter and process their experiences with authentic artifacts in different ways. Though her sample size is too small to support generalizations, it does serve to enrich ongoing conversations about the role of authenticity in museums exhibitions.

While Latham's research is restricted to providing a richer understanding of

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 13.

how visitors to museums understand their experiences with authentic objects, it begs the question of how visitors *perceive* authentic objects differently from identical replicas, if at all. Further, do visitors *evaluate* authentic objects differently from facsimiles? Research undertaken by Constanze Hampp, Ph.D. student at the Deutsches Museum, in Munich, Germany and Stephen Schwan, deputy director of the Knowledge Media Research Center in Tuebingen, Germany endeavored to explore these questions.<sup>27</sup> Their study took place at the Deutsches Museum, a museum of the history of science and technology. The research team selected two objects for use in their study: a moon rock picked up during the last Apollo-17 mission in 1972 and the space suit worn by a German astronaut during the flight to the Mire space station in 1992. Both objects were presented variously as either originals or as identical replicas by placing temporary signage beside the display case that explained that the original had been replaced for conservation purposes.<sup>28</sup> A qualitative analysis of the data collected from a questionnaire and follow-up interview with 120 adult visitors revealed that the range of thoughts and feelings that were stirred by visitors as a result of viewing the object were reported equally among those who had perceived the object to be an original versus those who had perceived the object to be a replica.<sup>29</sup> Perceived qualities were coded into 10 clusters and included the experience of empathy for the people who had initial contact with the object and the experience of positive emotions regarding the

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<sup>27</sup> Constanze Hampp and Stephen Schwan, "Perception and Evaluation of Authentic Objects: Findings from a Visitor Study," *Museum Management and Curatorship* 29, no. 4 (2014): 351.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 352.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 356.

object.<sup>30</sup>

Despite the equal distribution of perceived qualities among visitors who had understood the object to be the original versus those who saw it is a replica, visitors were split on their position towards the relevance of authenticity to their experience. Of the population, 46% of visitors indicated that authenticity was relevant to their experience and 47% indicated that it was not. Those that valued authenticity described the object's connection with history, projected aura, rare or unique qualities, prestige, and completeness. Those that expressed their belief in the irrelevance of authenticity described the replica's faithfulness to the original, the primary importance of imparting technological or scientific knowledge, and the belief that objects in museums serve only to generate historical narratives.<sup>31</sup>

The results of this study appear to indicate that there is no great difference between visitor experiences with original objects and facsimiles. However, nearly half of the study's participants consider authenticity to be relevant to their experiences in museums. This researcher argues that, while this study supports the integration of facsimiles into the galleries of science and technology museums, this research should be repeated in different types of museums to further test the validity of its results across the field. This researcher's hypothesis is that authenticity would be perceived and evaluated very differently with much older text-based artifacts and artworks.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 357.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 361.



## Preservation

### *Present and Future Rights to Access*

In his book *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, John Ruskin, a leading art critic of his time, laid out a series of foundational pillars to guide the profession. In his chapter on the role of heritage in architectural practice, Ruskin makes a case for the continual maintenance of historic sites. Though he specifically addresses the preservation of historic buildings and monuments, this particular view of preservation, guided by the notion that providing proper care for a cultural artifact will eliminate the need for future, remedial treatment, aligns with the general definition of preventive conservation today. In fact, in Ruskin's estimation, the restoration work that has been inflicted on historic architecture is "a destruction out of which no remnants can be gathered: a destruction accompanied with false description of the thing destroyed."<sup>32</sup> The damaging effects of shoddy conservation treatments are the product of inaccurate conjectures about the past. Here, Ruskin is not just referring to material aspects that are unfaithful to the original work but to "some life, some mysterious suggestion of what it had been, and of what it had lost."<sup>33</sup> Ruskin's idea that the monuments of the past are imbued with a vague, irreproducible quality is akin to Benjamin's notion of the aura of the original. Ruskin pushes this idea further by claiming that it is our duty to protect cultural artifacts but not for ourselves, for "[w]e have no right whatever to touch them. They are not ours. They belong partly to those who built them,

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<sup>32</sup> John Ruskin, "The Lamp of Memory," in *Historical Perspectives on Preventive Conservation*, ed. by Sarah Staniforth (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2013), 4.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

and partly to all the generations of mankind who are to follow us.”<sup>34</sup> According to Ruskin, we of the present are the stewards, and not the owners, of historic artifacts. As such, we are not granted the privilege or authority to do anything other than to provide an environment that will ensure their continued existence. Ruskin’s language is telling as the act of touch is synonymous with a kind of criminal manipulation (“we have no right”) that is an offense to the past and an affront to the future.

Professional organizations that represent the museum, library, and archive fields all offer clear statements of purpose and guidelines for institutional operation. The American Alliance of Museums offers a definition of collections stewardship that underlines the importance of both preservation and access when defining the museum’s duty to the public:

Stewardship is the careful, sound and responsible management of that which is entrusted to a museum’s care. Possession of collections incurs legal, social and ethical obligations to provide proper physical storage, management and care for the collections and associated documentation, as well as proper intellectual control. Collections are held in trust for the public and made accessible for the public’s benefit. Effective collections stewardship ensures that the objects the museum owns, borrows, holds in its custody and/or uses are available and accessible to present and future generations. A museum’s collections are an important means of advancing its mission and serving the public.<sup>35</sup>

This explanation asserts that preservation is an essential means of ensuring access, particularly access to objects by future generations. If material artifacts are not properly cared for, they will succumb to the agents of deterioration. If these objects disappear, the future public will be denied the benefits of access. While this is certainly true, the

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>35</sup> “Collections Stewardship,” American Alliance of Museums, accessed May 1, 2017, <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/collections-stewardship>.

definitions of public, benefit, and access are all open to interpretation. Public could refer to local or global audiences, benefit could describe positive intellectual, physical, or emotional outcomes, and access could cover remote, digital use or haptic engagement with the objects themselves. This statement, however, emphasizes the materiality of the object. In their published guidelines, the American Library Association also stresses the importance of insuring access to collections for future generations. However, their emphasis is more on the preservation of information than its material components. In the Preservation Policy adopted in 2008, ALA explained the goal was to “[promote] the preservation of our cultural heritage and [ensure] access to information in a usable and trustworthy form.”<sup>36</sup>

#### *As Developed and Practiced in Museums*

Museums and other repositories of text-based objects (i.e. libraries and archives) have developed preservation practices that do not always align and have, at times, developed independently of one another. Joyce Hill Stoner, director of the Preservation Studies doctoral program at the University of Delaware, traces the development of the field of conservation as practiced in museums from 1925 through the early 2000s in a paper delivered at the March 2003 National Academy of Sciences Arthur M. Sackler Colloquia. Her account breaks this evolution into two component parts. The first period, from 1925-1975, is marked by the expansion of the field with the proliferation of laboratories, the establishment of professional societies and training programs, and the foundation of major technical publications. The second, from 1975 to the present, is distinguished by increased

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<sup>36</sup> “ALA Preservation Policy 2008,” American Libraries Association, accessed November 12, 2017, <http://www.ala.org/alcts/resources/preserv/08alaprespolicy>.

specialization, a trend towards preventive conservation, and an increase in the number of skilled techniques and approaches.<sup>37</sup> Her report draws from the Oral History Project, an initiative undertaken in 1975 by the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation under Hill Stoner's direction. The project has produced 280 transcripts of interviews with conservators, conservation scientists, and professionals in related areas conducted by volunteers in the field.<sup>38</sup>

The narrative provided by Hill Stoner serves to underline the relative newness and unfixed nature of this sector of museum work. Conditions are such that "procedures that had once seemed black and white became gray and variable."<sup>39</sup> Hill Stoner depicts a dynamic profession that has come to rely on the collective research of art historians, scientists, and practicing conservators. Recognizing the expanding role of conservation in the museum, she makes the claim that "conservators must collaborate with curators, archivists, archaeologists, architects, and artists."<sup>40</sup> Educators are noticeably missing from the list of collaborative partners in her recommendation. With a shared interest in accessibility, educators and conservators might form a natural partnership.

In a paper presented at a 2004 conference on the role of touch in the museum at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, Emeritus Professor Elizabeth Pye

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<sup>37</sup> Joyce Hill Stoner, "Changing Approaches in Art Conservation: 1925 to the Present," in *Scientific Examination of Art: Modern Techniques in Conservation and Analysis*, Washington, D.C., 2005, (Washington D.C.: The National Academies Press, 2003): 80.

<sup>38</sup> "Our Initiatives," American Institute for Conservation, accessed July 6, 2017, [http://www.conservation-us.org/our-organizations/foundation-\(faic\)/initiatives/oral-history-project#.WV7m9NMrLR0](http://www.conservation-us.org/our-organizations/foundation-(faic)/initiatives/oral-history-project#.WV7m9NMrLR0).

<sup>39</sup> Joyce Hill Stoner, "Changing Approaches in Art Conservation: 1925 to the Present," in *Scientific Examination of Art: Modern Techniques in Conservation and Analysis*, Washington, D.C., 2005, (Washington D.C.: The National Academies Press, 2003): 80.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 83.

outlines the various ways in which the sense of touch is integral to the practice of conservation in order to illuminate the possibility of enabling visitors to handle objects in museum collections. Among other functions, conservators may use their hands to assess the weight and density, to test the flexibility, or to determine the texture of an object. Pye notes that, though all conservation has some basis in tactile knowledge, these practices vary in the degree to which their use intervenes with the condition and interpretation of an object. To this end, she points to two schools of conservation: remedial and preventive. Remedial conservation is concerned with suspending the effects of damage or decay with the use of methods that modify the appearance of an object. Preventive conservation seeks to avoid future damage by managing various environmental factors that might have adverse effects on an object's condition. The latter approach to conservation calls for less, if any, intervention.<sup>41</sup>

Ultimately, Pye argues, conservation is an inherently transformative act.<sup>42</sup> To support this claim, she cites a number of examples in which the interpretive actions of the conservator drastically changed the perception of an object. In one such instance, a large collection of Bronze Age ceramics originally reconstructed in the 19th and early 20th centuries were re-conserved resulting in the modification of the objects' shapes and decorative patterns. In another instance, Pye reports that a leather object that had been shaped as a jerkin was later reinterpreted as a satchel. Historically, some conservators

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<sup>41</sup> Elizabeth Pye, "Understanding Objects: The Role of Touch in Conservation," in *The Power of Touch*, ed. Elizabeth Pye (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2007), 121-122.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, 130.

went so far as to leave their signatures on the objects they repaired.<sup>43</sup> Various approaches to conservation differ only in the degree of their non-neutrality.

To conclude her analysis, Pye remarks that the field of conservation has moved increasingly away from the remedial towards the preventive. By controlling the environmental conditions to which it is exposed, conservators are able to insure an object's safety. As a result, visitors are typically denied the haptic experiences with objects that are the privilege of curators and conservators. However, Pye makes the convincing case that touch can be managed, just as light levels and length of exposure can be supervised to reduce the risk of light damage. Citing the expanding prevalence of handling collections by museums in the United Kingdom, she predicts that the management of touch will become an increasingly important aspect of conservation work.<sup>44</sup>

#### *As Developed and Practiced in Libraries and Archives*

The approach towards the preservation of materials in libraries and archives must be understood as distinct from that in museums. The terms "preservation" and "conservation" are used differently in these institutions and have been defined differently at various points in time. Libraries and archives, since the 1980s, have generally used the term "preservation" to denote the range of actions that are taken to reduce the impact of existential threats to collection objects. "Conservation" is considered the physical treatment of a damaged object by a trained professional.<sup>45</sup> Though the preservation of

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 130.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 135.

<sup>45</sup> "What is Preservation," Northeast Document Conservation Center, accessed November 15, 2017, <https://www.nedcc.org/preservation101/session-1/1what-is-preservation>.

text-based objects for continued use has always been a function of libraries and archives, it was not until the 1970s that a systematic approach to preservation began to emerge in the field.<sup>46</sup> The 1966 flood of the River Arno in Florence is considered by many specialists in paper conservation to be a turning point. This disaster resulted in the damage and total destruction of over a million books held within the Biblioteca Nazionale. Conservators and binders from all over the world joined together in an attempt to restore the library's collection, resulting in the development of new conservation techniques and a shift in emphasis away from the treatment of individual objects towards the treatment of collections in their entirety.<sup>47</sup> A fire that destroyed 150,000 books at the Temple University Law Library in 1972, again focused the attention of professionals in libraries and archives on disaster control and further developed restoration techniques.<sup>48</sup> Prior to these catastrophic losses, a new understanding of the fragile nature of paper produced in the mid-nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century emerged as a result of the research done by William J. Barrow, a chemist and paper conservator. His landmark study in the late 1950s revealed that a mere three percent of the books reviewed (published between 1900 and 1949) would last more than 50 years.<sup>49</sup> As a result, library and archive communities began to see the need for a more systematic approach to preservation.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> George Martin Cunha and Dorothy Grant Cunha, *Library and Archives Conservation: 1980s and Beyond*, (Metuchen, New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1983), 3.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>49</sup> "What is Preservation," Northeast Document Conservation Center, accessed November 15, 2017, <https://www.nedcc.org/preservation101/session-1/1what-is-preservation>.

In the 1970s, further research was undertaken to understand paper as a material and a range of studies were done that considered the effect of environmental factors such as temperature, humidity, and light on text-based objects.<sup>50</sup> The establishment of regional centers for conservation, such as the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) and the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts, was a response to the expense associated with the skilled labor and equipment necessary to perform this specialized work.<sup>51</sup> According to NEDCC's guide, a preservation program in a library and archive should entail environmental control, disaster planning, security, adequate storage and proper handling, digitization, and conservation treatment.<sup>52</sup>

### Visitor Experiences

In seeking out the potential beneficial outcomes of a museum visit, we must understand what types of experiences are available to the visitor. In their 1999 study of satisfying visitor experiences at nine Smithsonian museums, Andrew J. Pekarik, Senior Research Analyst, Zahava D. Doering, Senior Social Scientist, and David A. Karns, Senior Behavioral Scientist, all of the Smithsonian Institution, reported that experiences can be sorted into four clusters: object, cognitive, introspective, and social.<sup>53</sup> Visitor descriptions that mentioned a focus on a material artifact that exists outside of the visitor were termed "object experiences." The code "cognitive experience" was attributed to responses that

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<sup>50</sup> George Martin Cunha and Dorothy Grant Cunha, *Library and Archives Conservation: 1980s and Beyond*, (Metuchen, New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1983), 5.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>52</sup> What is Preservation," Northeast Document Conservation Center, accessed November 15, 2017, <https://www.nedcc.org/preservation101/session-1/1what-is-preservation>.

<sup>53</sup> A. J. Pekarik, Z. D. Doering, and D. A. Karns. "Exploring Satisfying Experiences in Museums," *Curator: The Museum Journal* 42, no. 2 (1999): 154.



privileged the interpretive or intellectual aspects of the experience. “Introspective experiences” happened when visitors were prompted to turn their thoughts towards private self-reflection. Finally, “social experiences” were characterized by the reported pleasure of spending time in the company of friends or family members. The team began their research by simply asking visitors to recall different satisfying visits to a particular kind of museum. The team discerned patterns among the responses and coded these descriptions into 14 items that could be further placed into the aforementioned categories of experience. This taxonomy was presented as a randomized list to 2,828 visitors at nine different Smithsonian museums both at entrance and exit points. Depending on the location of the study, visitors were asked to select from the list the items that reflected the experiences they wished to have on their visit that day, had with the subject matter in the past, had on the visit to the museum that day, had elsewhere in the museum that day, or had in that particular museum in the past.

The results demonstrated that different types of museums elicit different types of experiences to varying degrees. Object experiences were highly rated by visitors to the National Zoo, the National Museum of Natural History, and the Renwick Gallery, a museum of American crafts. Introspective experiences were most highly valued by visitors to the National Museum of American History. Visitors to the National Zoo reported that they valued social experiences more than any other museum audience. Cognitive experiences were selected by the least amount of visitors.

In her 2008 qualitative study at the Queensland Museum in Australia, Jan Packer explored the perceived value and benefits of a museum experience (distinct from those related to learning outcomes) from the point of view of the visitor. Her research used data

collected via semi-structured interviews with 44 adult visitors upon their exit from the museum to evaluate the ability of multiple theoretical frameworks, including the taxonomy of satisfying experiences developed by Pekarik, Doering, and Karns, to describe what a visitor might gain from a museum visit. Using the concepts of “psychological well-being,” “subjective well-being,” and “mental restoration,” Packer’s research moved beyond the description of those experiences to an analysis of their benefits. Packer’s understanding of “psychological well-being” draws on the field of positive psychology and is comprised of six elements: autonomy, personal growth, environmental mastery, purpose in life, positive relations, and self-acceptance. Packer defines “subjective well-being” as feeling good or feeling happy as a result of the visit. The concept of “mental restoration” is derived from the field of environmental psychology and is comprised of three elements: relaxation, peace and tranquility, and thoughtfulness. The Queensland Museum’s encyclopedic range of exhibition material led Packer to believe that a broad spectrum of experiences and benefits would be represented in visitor responses.

According to her research, 93% of those interviewed mentioned at least one of the four clusters of satisfying experiences. Packer interpreted this substantial response rate as evidence that Pekarik, Doering, and Karns’s model of satisfying experiences is an adequate framework with which to analyze visitor experiences. Of the total sample, 68% described object experience as an important component of their visit. Visitors emphasized the opportunity to see rare or valuable objects “in real life” as especially meaningful elements of their experiences. Cognitive experiences were described by 70% of visitors.

Introspective experiences were mentioned by 55% of the museum's audience followed by social experiences at just under half of the respondents.<sup>54</sup>

The portion of her study that focused on the benefits of these experiences revealed the prevalence of elements attached to “psychological well-being” and “mental restoration” in self-reported descriptions of the benefits of museum visits. Every element of “psychological well-being” except for autonomy was identified by visitors to the Queensland Museum. Of the total survey population, 59% mentioned at least one element of “psychological well-being.” Only 11% of interviews touched on “subjective well-being.” Just over half (57%) of the visitors surveyed described some aspect of “mental restoration” as a beneficial outcome of their experience. Packer's inquiry into the benefits of museum visitation is limited in that interviews took place immediately upon exiting the museum. It may take more time for visitors to unpack the value of the experience.

In the fields of material culture and anthropology, much work has been done to better understand human interactions with objects. With these lenses in place, objects are representations of specific, socially constructed meanings that the museum visitor is expected to draw out of the exhibition. In their research on human-object experiences, Elizabeth Wood, Professor of Museum Studies and Teacher Education at Indiana University, and Kiersten Latham, Associate Professor in the School of Information at Kent State, adopt a phenomenological framework. Drawing on the concept of the lived experience, they outline an Object Knowledge Framework as a means to describe the multitude of ways in which an individual may acquire knowledge of an object in the

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<sup>54</sup> Jan Packer, “Beyond Learning: Exploring Visitors' Perceptions of the Value and Benefits of Museum Experiences,” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 51, no. 1 (2008): 42-43.

museum setting.<sup>55</sup> The lived experience, the subject of phenomenological inquiry, is defined as an event that happens only when an individual is simultaneously aware of its occurrence. In the museum setting, this can take the form of profoundly personal meaning-making.

The Object Knowledge Framework proposes a relationship between three separate spheres: the multi-dimensional ways of knowing informed by past and present experiences known as an individual's lifeworld, the multi-dimensional positioning of the object within the museum context known as the objectworld, and the coming together of these two spheres, if the conditions are right, in what is known as the unified experience.<sup>56</sup> The interaction between these distinct fields is necessarily unique to each visitor but Wood and Latham argue that, with an awareness of the layers that make up the lifeworld and the objectworld, it is possible for museum professionals to create conditions in which these multitudes may thrive.

The lifeworld and the objectworld each consist of three layers that allow for infinite individual experiences with objects on display: the individual, group, and material. With regard to the lifeworld, these dimensions refer to different ways of knowing. Though all three of these methods are in constant operation, the most immediate is the individual. This personal knowledge of the object is achieved by the prior knowledge and experiences of the visitor. Group knowledge refers to shared social, cultural, and historical narratives. Material knowledge deals solely with the physical aspects of the object as perceived by the

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<sup>55</sup> Kiersten F. Latham, and Elizabeth Wood, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums*, (New York: Routledge, 2016), 50.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 52.

senses. As Wood and Latham point out, the senses extend beyond the visual and aural paths of investigation that are traditionally allowed in the museum setting.<sup>57</sup> When applied to the objectworld, these dimensions reflect the layers of narrative or description that are attached to a specific object. The individual dimension consists of the immediate connections to either a specific person, such as a past owner, or group of people associated with the object. The group dimension refers to broad human themes that cut through time and geography. Lastly, the material dimension is, of course, the physical aspects of the object including shape, color, texture, smell, density, and so on, many of which are inaccessible to the museum visitor.<sup>58</sup>

As evinced by Packer's research, the object and the visitor's interaction with the object remain at the core of the museum experience. Kiersten Latham's study of visitor-object encounters rests on the assumption that personal object experiences contribute to meaning-making in the museum setting. She draws on the framework of Reader Response Theory, specifically the work of Louise Rosenblatt, to explore the so-called "numinous experience," described as a meaningful experience that ends with a profound connection to historical figures in the past.<sup>59</sup> In a qualitative study involving interviews with 18 participants, Latham distilled the numinous experience into one that is characterized by a "Unity of the Moment" in which emotions, intellect, and object are linked together; a sense of transportation to another time or place; a sense of connection between the past, the self,

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 35.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 36.

<sup>59</sup> Kiersten F. Latham, "Experiencing Documents," *Journal of Documentation* 70, no. 4. (2014) : 551.

and the spirit; and the central role of the object in connecting the visitor to the past.<sup>60</sup> Her research aids in describing the qualities of the experience but does not attempt to explain the conditions that lead to its occurrence.

## The Sense of Touch

### *Physiological and Philosophical Understandings of Touch*

It is popularly understood that human beings perceive the world around them through the five senses: sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch. As Aristotle conceived of it over 2000 years ago in *De Anima*, the inventory of sensory properties includes visual, acoustic, olfactory, and tactile (with a subcategory of gustatory) cues. He theorized that “the common sense” synthesizes this raw data into recognizable forms that allow us to distinguish objects as discrete entities.<sup>61</sup> Ever since, philosophers and scientists have sought to define and describe the various channels by which we come to know the world around us. Among the senses, touch has unique properties that distinguish it from other sensory modalities. Matthew Fulkerson, faculty member of the Interdisciplinary Program in Cognitive Science at the University of California, San Diego, reports that, in fact, touch is unlike the other senses because it does not arise out of a single sense organ. The skin itself is not sensory but contains multiple sensory systems.<sup>62</sup> These various nerve channels allow us to perceive thermal properties, weight, texture, shape and so on. Thus, the dominant

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 552.

<sup>61</sup> Richard Sorabji, “Aristotle on Demarcating the Five Senses,” *The Philosophical Review* 80, no. 1(1971): 60.

<sup>62</sup> Matthew Fulkerson, “Touch,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed November 15, 2017, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/touch>.

view in current science literature is that touch is a multisensory modality.<sup>63</sup> Yvette Hatwell, professor of experimental psychology at Pierre Mendès-France University, explains that touch may be categorized as either cutaneous (passive) or kinesthetic (exploratory). Further, touch is proximal, meaning it is limited to the zone of contact. This thesis focuses on haptic touch, or the process of manual investigation. Hatwell describes haptic perception as sequential, initially incomplete, and often disjointed. It is spatial and, therefore, non-linear.<sup>64</sup> As these distinctive features designate haptic touch as an inherently active sensory modality, this thesis argues that its use should be embraced by museums as an additional form of participatory experience available to their visitors.

In his 1944 book *Phenomenology of Perception*, French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty engaged with the work of empiricist thinkers Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger as well as the contemporary research of psychologists and neurologists to describe the perceptual experience.<sup>65</sup> The work is rooted in the conviction that the individual's understanding of the world is the result of sensory processes. The section titled "The Thing and the Natural World" includes a discussion of the relationship between vision and tactile experience. Merleau-Ponty discusses the relationship of objectivity to both sensory modalities:

In visual experience, which pushes objectification further than does tactile experience, we can, at least at first sight, flatter ourselves that we constitute the world, because it presents us with a spectacle spread out before us at a

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Yvette Hatwell, "Touch and Cognition," *Touching for Knowing: Cognitive psychology of haptic manual perception*, ed. by Yvette Hatwell Arlette Streri, Edouard Gentaz, (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 2003): 5.

<sup>65</sup> Ted Toadvine, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed November 14, 2017, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/merleau-ponty/#PhenPerc>.

distance, and gives us the illusion of being immediately present everywhere and being situated nowhere. Tactile experience, on the other hand, adheres to the surface of our body; we cannot unfold it before us, and it never quite becomes an object.<sup>66</sup>

In this passage, Merleau-Ponty reveals his claim that objective perception is an illusion in opposition to the notions of the rational observer as described in Cartesian philosophy.<sup>67</sup> Within that tradition, the rational observer is a disembodied mind that is removed from the world which it perceives. As Jenni Lauwrens, professor of Visual Culture Studies at the University of Pretoria, points out in her paper on the refuted dominance of vision in art historical discourse, Merleau-Ponty's belief is aligned with the so-called "sensory turn." This paradigm shift occurred within the humanities and social sciences in the early twenty-first century.<sup>68</sup> This change in the fundamental assumptions guiding the thinking of intellectuals has roots in Aristotelian philosophy and follows the linguistic, cultural, and pictorial turns that have developed as approaches to understanding the ways in which humans understand or relate to the world they inhabit.<sup>69</sup> Sensory scholars reject both the logocentrism characteristic of the linguistic turn as well as the exaltation of vision as the primary mode of perception at the exclusion of other sensory modalities.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, (New York: Routledge, 2002), 369.

<sup>67</sup> Jenni Lauwrens, "The Sensory Turn and Art History," *Journal of Art Historiography* 7 (2012): 15.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 5.



In her cultural history of the sense of touch, Constance Classen, Senior Fellow at Concordia University's Centre for Sensory Studies, offers an account of the shifting trends of thought regarding its experience and mediation beginning with the Middle Ages. Tracing these developments forward in time, Classen arrives at the museum, a space that for many is inextricably tied to the dictum "Do Not Touch." Classen's research—drawn in part from the writing of European visitors to early museums in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries—reveals, however, that this was not always the case. At this time, touch was a customary mode of access in museums.

Classen suggests that tactile accessibility was well-established at this time due to certain practical and social considerations. Early museums still resembled the private collections from which they developed. Abiding by an established code of hospitality, curators offered objects up to guests to explore with their hands as well as their eyes. If a curator failed to provide this experience, they risked the dissatisfaction of their guests as demonstrated in a complaint recorded by a curator at the Ashmolean Museum in 1760:

She desired me to take the Glass from off several of the Drawers, which I was somewhat unwilling to do, lest anything be lost by that means; which she perceiving she told me that I was not quite so civil as might be; that the last time she had seen the Museum [...] she had handled and examin'd the Curiosities in the Cabinet as long as she pleas'd."<sup>71</sup>

Classen offers this record as evidence that visitor expectations spoke to the social conventions that had long accompanied the display of rare and valuable objects in the private collections of the wealthy. In addition to functioning as a signal of hospitality, the

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<sup>71</sup> Constance Classen, *The Deepest Sense : A Cultural History of Touch*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012): 137.

practice of allowing visitors to handle objects was a consequence of the fact that glass display cases were expensive. In the interest of saving money and space, objects were often hung on the wall or stored in drawers where they were easily accessible to the curious visitor.<sup>72</sup>

Classen notes that though the reasons for touching objects on display could be wide-ranging, generally visitors did so as a supplementary action to an initial visual appraisal. In a description of her visit, one seventeenth-century visitor to the Ashmolean Museum wrote “there is a Cane which looks like a solid heavy thing but if you take it in your hands its as light as a feather.”<sup>73</sup> Touch is used as a means of correcting ocular misconceptions. Another visitor to the Tower of London remarked how easily one could reach through the grate installed to prevent theft of the crown jewels to “pick up the articles to feel their weight, so that everything can still be seen tolerably.”<sup>74</sup> Here, the act of touch is described as a component of “seeing.”

In addition to citing descriptions of the rational investigations aided by the hands, Classen sheds light on the emotional effects achieved by these intimate encounters. A German traveler described her visit to the British Museum in 1786:

With what sensations one handles a Carthaginian helmet excavated near Capua, household utensils from Herculaneum. ... There are mirrors too, belonging to Roman matrons ... with one of these mirrors in my hand I looked amongst the urns, thinking meanwhile, “Maybe chance has preserved amongst these remains some part of the dust from the fine eyes of a Greek or Roman lady, who so many centuries ago surveyed herself in this mirror...”<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 137.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid, 136.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 137.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 141.

Here, the sense of touch has enabled a profound connection to the people and places of antiquity. The act of holding an object activated a sense of imaginative empathy that allowed this visitor to contemplate the extinguished corporeality of a civilization long gone.

It was not until the mid-nineteenth century that attitudes towards touch in the museum began to shift. More and more exhibits were placed behind glass and lighting was improved to allow for better visual access. Over time, visitors accepted the notion that to touch was an act of disrespect that risked damage to the object. Further, the public began to internalize the belief that touch could not aid in contributing to the cognitive and aesthetic experiences that made up the ideal museum visit.<sup>76</sup>

Offering hands-on experiences, whether via the direct handling of objects from the collection or through the use of a digital interactive, is a technique that serves the goal of increased accessibility. In his guide to the management and development of interactive exhibitions, Tim Caulton, Learning and Audience Development Director of Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum, addresses the ambiguity of the terms “hands-on” and “interactive” and offers a definition that clarifies his understanding of the objectives and necessary components of such an exhibition:

A hands-on or interactive museum exhibit has clear educational objectives which encourage individuals or groups of people working together to understand real objects or real phenomena through physical exploration which involves choice and initiative.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 145.

<sup>77</sup> Tim Caulton, *Hands-On Exhibitions: Managing Interactive Museums and Science Centres*, (New York: Routledge, 1998), 2.

Caulton points out that hands-on exhibitions are designed to help visitors achieve learning objectives and may take place in either individual or group settings. Additionally, they are designed to engage the visitor with deliberate, physical participation. Though the focus of his study is the application of this approach within science centers and museums in the United Kingdom, this definition may be applied to museums beyond that scope. In fact, the hands-on exhibition traces its origins to developments in both children's museums of the late nineteenth century and science museums of the early twentieth century. The Franklin Institute of Philadelphia has had its walk-through beating heart since 1935.<sup>78</sup> In 1964, Michael Spock pioneered the contemporary children's museum after he conducted experiments at Boston Children's Museum that made a case for the efficacy of hands-on experiences and restructured the exhibition space accordingly.<sup>79</sup>

Caulton does not offer an explanation as to why this approach to learning took root in these types of institutions prior to its cautious application in history and art museums. The researcher believes that interpretation in the art or history museum tends to hinge on a reverence for artifacts rather than the lived experiences of the visitor. Additionally, in this work, Caulton approaches hands-on experiences from an exhibition design perspective. Are hands-on activities for visitors experienced differently when they are facilitated by an educator as opposed to those that are built into an exhibition, and if so, how? Finally, the researcher posits that visitors may gain more than just educational benefits from engaging in hands-on activities in museums.

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 5.

Kiersten Latham and Elizabeth Wood further refine the difference between “hands-on” experiences that are designed to be opportunities for process-based learning and what they term “phenomenological touch” or the lived experience of making haptic contact with an object.<sup>80</sup> They begin with the assumption that within the context of the museum setting, the visitor is able to engage in a transactional encounter with an object on display that provides a “range of possible human experiences, a personal sense of the life of another as it was lived, or simply provides access to the vital and fundamental aspects of being human.”<sup>81</sup> Latham and Wood understand the museum object as, essentially, stimulus for the senses. They argue that if museums seek to provide wider accessibility to their collections, they should consider expanding the interpretive modes that are permitted by the institution by “sacrificing”<sup>82</sup> objects to handling collections. The term “sacrifice” is perhaps not accurate. This researcher believes that if a thorough analysis of an object’s condition is conducted and proper supervision is in place, it is possible to use it in a way that does no more damage than simply placing it in an exhibition case or lending it to another institution.

Recent research shows that the experience of touching an object from a museum’s collection may improve the health and wellbeing of those permitted to do so. Helen Chatterjee, Deputy Director of University College, London (UCL) Museums and Collections, Sonjel Vreeland, Master of Museum Education from the University of King’s College, Halifax,

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<sup>80</sup> Elizabeth Wood and Kiersten F. Latham, “The Thickness of Things: Exploring the Curriculum of Museums through Phenomenological Touch,” *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* 27, no. 2 (2013): 57.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 52.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 59.

and Guy Noble, Arts Curator at UCL Hospitals initiated a pilot project in 2008 titled “Heritage in Hospitals” to determine whether or not haptic access to museum objects improved patient wellbeing. A quantitative and qualitative analysis of data gathered from 32 sessions with patients revealed that life satisfaction and health status improved after handling museum objects. The objects used in the study were selected to reflect the range of objects housed in the UCL Museums and Collections (UCL M&C) including natural history and geology specimens, art in the form of etchings or prints, and archaeological artifacts. Objects were placed before the patient and, for the 20 to 50 minutes during which the session lasted, the facilitator conducted a semi-structured interview that consisted of questions that prodded the patient to describe the object as they were handling it and to relay its meaning, personal or otherwise. At the beginning and end of each session, participants were asked to self-evaluate the state of their health and to indicate a level of satisfaction with their life.<sup>83</sup> On average, patients reported higher levels of health and life satisfaction after the experience.<sup>84</sup> Using the Constant Comparative method for analysis of the qualitative data, the researcher defined two emergent themes in the interviews with patients: personal/reminiscence and impersonal/education.<sup>85</sup> Within the personal/reminiscence category, patients used the experience as a means to discuss their

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<sup>83</sup> Helen Chatterjee, Sonjel Vreeland, and Guy Noble, “Museopathy: Exploring the Healing Potential of Handling Museum Objects,” in *Museum and Society* 7, no. 3: 166-167.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 175.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 171.

illness and to assign meaning to their experiences. Impersonal/education conversational topics were focused on information about the object provided by the facilitator.<sup>86</sup>

In addition to codifying the kind of thinking and conversation that was prompted by handling museum objects, the study also endeavored to observe the variety of distinct types of touch as applied to objects by participants. These types were laid out in the following list:

- stroking, petting, and tracing,
- hesitant/cautious,
- pulling the object close to oneself,
- working the object/imaginative touching,
- unconscious or absent-minded touching while looking elsewhere,
- exploratory touch,
- grabbing, rough handling,
- and playful.<sup>87</sup>

The research team noted that recording the relative types and frequency of handling revealed a tension within their study: namely, that it was unclear whether or not the positive impact described by patients was a result of haptic engagement or whether it was a result of the facilitator's conversation. The research team understood these two elements as inseparable.

## Conclusion

The literature reviewed by the researcher illustrates that authenticity, the quality attributed to the original objects of historical significance housed within museum, library, and archive collections, is a contested term. It is experienced, perceived, and evaluated differently among individuals. Acting as their stewards, professionals in museums,

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<sup>86</sup> Helen Chatterjee, Sonjel Vreeland, and Guy Noble, "Museopathy: Exploring the Healing Potential of Handling Museum Objects," *Museum and Society*, 7, no. 3: 173.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 169.

libraries, and archives have engaged in preservation activities to insure the prolonged access to the historical, text-based objects in their collections. The history and practice of conservation in museums differs from that in libraries and archives. The research that has been done concerning the experiences of visitors to museums reveals that beneficial outcomes extend beyond the educational. Through the early twentieth century, touch was a common component of the visitor's experience. Although manual access is now much more restricted, the development of hands-on exhibition design and the spreading implementation of handling collections signals a change in attitude towards the use of this sensory mode. This researcher's own study will contribute to a better understanding of how the museum, library, and archive communities approach the tension that exists between the preservation of text-based objects and their use by the general public. Additionally, this study will provide an interpretation of what visitors to museums stand to gain from haptic experiences with text-based objects.



## Chapter III: Methodology

### Rationale

The research methods selected for this study were designed to answer the following questions:

1. How do museums, archives, and libraries manage visitor access to text-based artifacts in their collections while insuring the maintained condition of those objects?
2. How and why might an institution implement a program that allows the general public to handle historical text-based artifacts from the collection?
3. What motivates visitor participation in a program that allows the general public to handle rare books, manuscripts, and letters and how are those experiences described by participants?

To assess the first question, the researcher created a survey with questions designed to gauge both departmental and institutional attitudes towards visitor access and object conservation. Using a mixed-methods approach, the questionnaire was designed to measure and describe trends in manual access to text-based objects by the general public. To answer the second and third questions, the researcher conducted a case study of the Rosenbach Museum and Library's Hands-On Tour program. The case study consisted of two component parts: a semi-structured interview with Judy Guston, Director of Collections and one of the staff members who piloted the Hands-On Tour program, and a survey designed for recent participants in the program. The case study of a particular program was designed to collect primarily qualitative data that reflects the complex goals

and expectations that drive the program as well as those expressed by the program's participants.

### Participants

Professionals in museums, archives, and libraries were initially contacted by the researcher via an emailed invitation to participate in an online survey. The researcher gathered the contact information for staff in education, conservation, and curatorial departments, when available, in 51 institutions across the country. The range of institutions represented by this sampling included small to large museums with collections of rare books, manuscripts, and letters, college or university libraries, public libraries, public archives, and independent research libraries. To achieve a more random population sample, the researcher shared a link to this survey on the following listservs: Museum-Ed, the American Alliance of Museums, the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, and the Society of American Archivists. Included in the survey invitation was a request to share the survey with colleagues with relevant experience. As this survey did invite professionals to be critical of the institutions under which they are employed, participants were assured of anonymity in the reporting of this data. A total of 50 respondents answered the survey. In many cases, surveys were not answered completely; therefore the researcher has analyzed results on a question-by-question basis.

Participants in the case study of the Rosenbach Museum's Hands-On Tour program included Judy Guston, the museum's current director of collections, and 158 visitors who participated in the program from May 2015 through May 2017. The researcher chose to interview Guston as she played an integral role in developing the program at the museum.

Hands-On Tour participants are asked to register for the program online. The email addresses provided by participants through this form were compiled by an administrative staff member and used to directly contact this population with a survey invitation signed by the researcher via the museum's MailChimp account. The researcher felt she would receive a higher response rate if solicitations were delivered through the museum than if she sent invitations through her university email account. Survey participants were promised anonymity in the analysis of collected data. A total of 35 people responded to this survey.

### Demographics

The first question posed by the researcher in the survey of professionals working with rare books, letters, and manuscripts asked respondents to identify the type of institution in which they work. From the answers provided, the researcher determined that the institutions that house text-based objects in their collections fall within the following categories: Museums, Public Libraries, Academic or Research Libraries, Archives, Hybrid Institutions, and Other (see Table 1). Special collections libraries and private libraries were responses coded as Other. Survey respondents were also asked to provide their job title. These responses were grouped by the researcher into the following categories: Curatorial, Collection Care, Education and Public Programming, Reference and Research, and Other (see Table 2). Included in the category of Other were "deputy director," "marketing coordinator," and "manuscript processor."

*Table 1.* Breakdown of survey participants by institution.

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Type of Institution	Number of Survey Participants, n=50
Museum	15
Public Library	1
Academic or Research Library	12
Archive	10
Hybrid Institution	5
Other	7

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*Table 2.* Breakdown of survey participants by area of professional expertise.

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Area of Professional Expertise	Number of Survey Participants, n=49
Curatorial	9
Collection Care	15
Education and Public Programming	11
Reference and Research	6
Other	8

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An analysis of data collected from online surveys to past Hands-On Tour participants shows that members of this group are most likely to identify as white, female, and are between the age of 65 to 74. This group is also highly educated. Over half of Hands-

On Tour participants (64.5%) have obtained post-graduate degrees. The majority of Hands-On Tour participants (35.5%) are between the ages of 65 to 74 years old. Except for 35 to 44 year-olds (0.7%), all other age groups are equally represented (see Table 3). The wide majority of participants identify as white or Caucasian (86.2%). Other races have minimal representation as visitors to this program (see Table 4).

*Table 3.* Breakdown of survey participants by age group.

Age Group	Percentage of Survey Participants, n=35
18-24	12.9%
25-34	12.9%
35-44	0.7%
45-54	12.9%
55-64	9.7%
65-74	35.5%
75+	6.5%

*Table 4.* Breakdown of survey participants by racial identity.

Race	Percentage of Survey Participants, n=35
Black or African American	3.5%
Hispanic or Latino	0.0%
White or Caucasian	86.2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	10.3%
Native American	0.0%
Prefer not to answer	0.0%

## Anticipated Results

The researcher expected to find that the majority of institutions that house text-based collections do not support opportunities for hands-on access by the general public. However, the researcher anticipated a lack of consensus among professionals working in these institutions with regard to attitudes concerning the value of visitor experiences when weighed against the risk of exposing objects to damage through haptic use. Specifically, the researcher hypothesized that individuals working in collection care (such as conservators and registrars) would be less likely to endorse programming that, because it places them in the hands of non-experts, puts historic or rare objects at risk than those working in education and public programming. Lastly, the researcher anticipated that professionals would express some dissatisfaction when asked to evaluate the experiences of non-researchers visiting their collections.

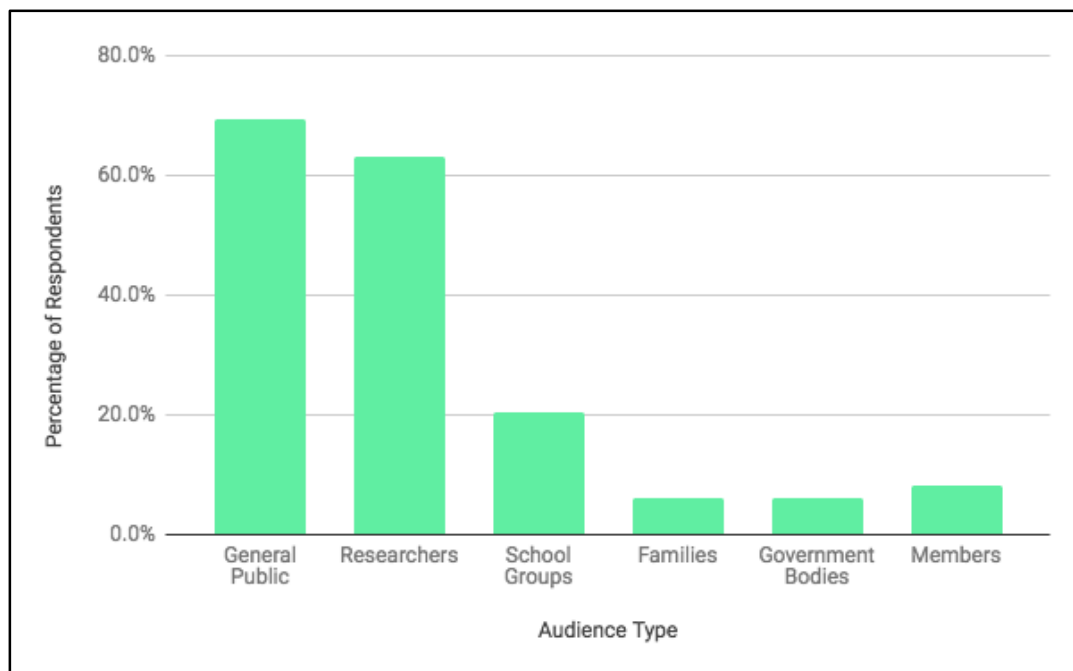
The survey administered to Hands-On Tour participants was designed to determine who makes up the audience for this particular program, why they elected to take part in it, and whether or not the experience matched or exceeded their expectations. The researcher anticipated the data to yield a majority white, older, and well-educated visitor demographic. Further, the researcher expected participants to expressly discuss the desire to have physical access to objects on the tour. Finally, the researcher predicted that participants would report intellectual, emotional, and social experiential benefits as a result of attending a Hands-On Tour.

## Chapter IV: Presentation of the Data and Conclusions

### Study of Professionals in Museums, Archives, and Libraries

#### *Data Analysis*

To better contextualize individual attitudes and institutional policies towards object handling, the researcher asked survey respondents to describe their institution's primary and secondary audiences (see Figure 1). Responses were placed into the following categories: General Public, Researchers, School Groups, Families, Government Bodies, and Members. The most common answers were the General Public and Researchers with 69.4% of professionals stating that either a primary or secondary audience is constituted of the general public and 63.3% identifying researchers. School Groups were mentioned by only 20.4% and Families, Government Bodies, and Members were each identified by less than 10% of participants. Each of these groups has distinct needs, desires, and expectations.



*Figure 1.* Primary and secondary audiences served by institutions as reported by survey respondents. (n=49)

To gain a better understanding of how professionals across departments and institutions define their objectives for the visitor experience, survey participants were asked, “What do you hope visitors will gain from experiencing your collection?” This question was posed using language that permitted respondents to answer in a personal manner, rather than answering as direct representatives of their organizations, and to voice their aspirations rather than simply surmising the current impact of their collections on their visitors. Respondents were invited to speak to effects that are *possible* rather than those that are currently observed. While this question was designed to provide room for interpretation, the researcher does recognize the ambiguity attached to the terms “visitor” and “experience.” It is unclear if professionals in libraries and archives consider all patrons of their institutions to be visitors. Additionally, the term “experience” might also be interpreted broadly. An “experience” might include a scheduled reading room visit, a self-guided tour, or participation in a special event or program. This open-ended prompt generated responses that were coded by the researcher into six categories: Cognitive Insight, Aesthetic Appreciation, Affective Benefits, Positive Social Engagement, Increased Access, and Other. In many cases, respondents described more than one desired outcome for visitors to their collection (see Figure 2).

Over half of the respondents (60%) indicated that they hoped visitors would benefit from increased cognitive insight. Answers that were sorted into this category were those that explicitly mentioned “knowledge,” “information,” “learning,” “education,” or “research” as applied to areas of study as specialized as genealogy or as broad as the humanities. Given that the mission statements guiding museums, libraries, and archives typically identify education as a core function and purpose of these organizations, it is surprising



that a larger segment of survey respondents did not share, or at least express, the hope that their audience would learn from their collection. A significant amount of respondents (48.9%) answered that they wished for their collection to inspire what this researcher has identified as Aesthetic Appreciation. This category is closely related to, yet distinct from, that of Cognitive Insight. Common to the responses placed in this category was an abstract appreciation or strengthened affinity for a subject, idea, or collection or, as one respondent put it, “[a]n understanding of the importance of document-based collections and the stories they tell. We hope guests move beyond the sense that documents are dusty old things stored on shelves.”<sup>88</sup> Characteristic of responses in this category was an expressed desire that visitors would gain a recognition of the transcendent worth of the collection. This aspiration was signified by one respondent’s description of “how important special collections are to understanding our present world.” The researcher considered understanding or appreciating the power of a collection to confer knowledge to be a separate benefit from actually utilizing a collection to extract information.

Less common responses across all institutions and departments were Increased Access, Affective Benefits, and Positive Social Engagement. Only 22.2% of professionals communicated an interest in encouraging positive Affective Benefits within visitors to their institution. Examples of such benefits include a feeling of meaningful personal relevance, articulated by one respondent as “a connection to our collection in relation to their own lives and passions.” Other responses in this category simply mentioned the experience of positive emotions such as “happiness” and “delight.” The researcher considered self-knowledge (“a sense of self”) as yet another description of a desired affective benefit

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<sup>88</sup> See appendix for all quoted responses.

obtained by visitors. For 6.7% of professionals, accessing the collection was considered a benefit in and of itself. The ability to borrow books from the institution and the experience of “being in the presence of objects” were coded as Increased Access. Answers categorized as Other were those that did not align with the themes discussed above. Examples of such answers were the names of specific programmatic offerings.

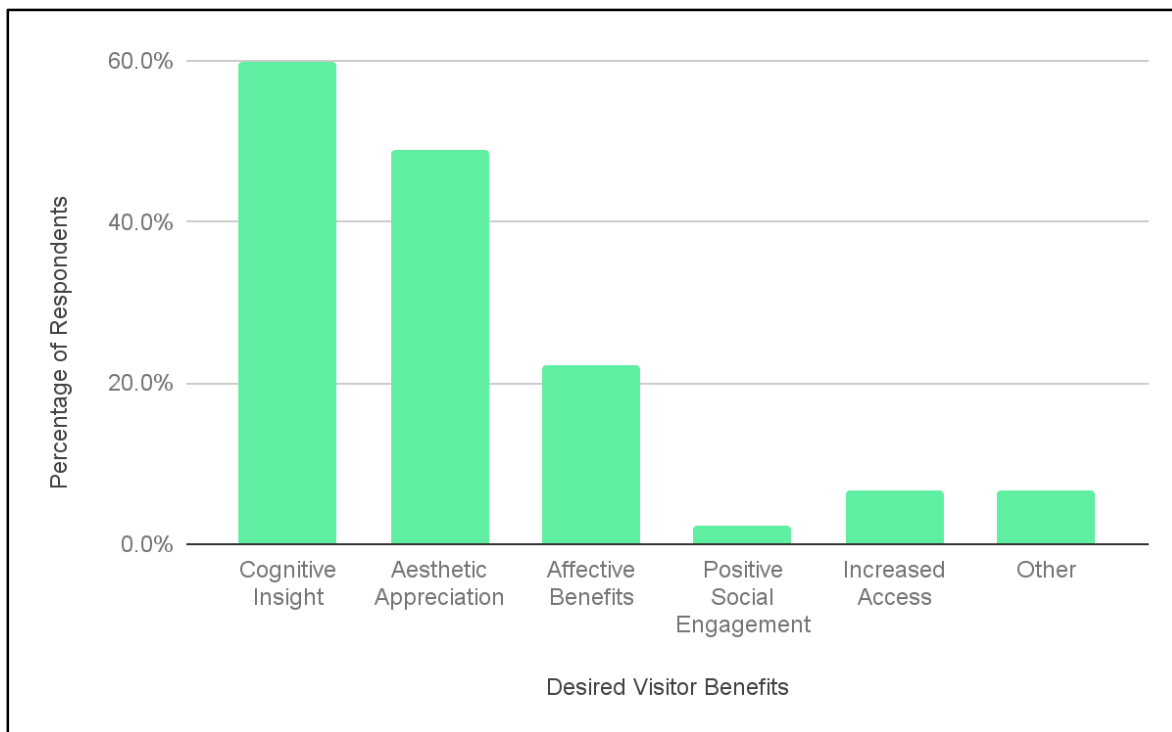


Figure 2. The responses of museum, library, and archive professionals to the question, “What do you hope visitors will gain from experiencing your collection?” (n=45)

Contrary to the researcher’s hypothesis, the majority of institutions do allow non-researchers to touch parts of their collections. Across museums, libraries, and archives, 62.2% of institutions permit the handling of the historical, text-based objects by non-researchers (see Figure 3). This finding, however, is potentially problematic. This study defines “researcher” as an individual actively engaged in an academic or scientific inquiry; thus, a “non-researcher” is any member of the general public who is not undertaking such

work. However, several responses to the survey indicated that “researcher” and “non-researcher” are not universally interpreted. As an educator from a special collections library reported, “We are expanding our criteria for those who can become researchers, to artists, classroom teachers, and even high school students. So while a non-researcher cannot handle an object at this time, our definition of researcher is much wider than many similar institutions.” Similarly, a conservator working in an archive explained, “The requirement to become a researcher is very easy at my institution; the term is quite open. So anyone can become a researcher and thus have full access to and benefit from our collection.” The qualifications to be considered a “researcher” are less restrictive than the researcher had assumed; thus it may be presumed that even more members of the public are permitted to handle collections than an analysis of these data reveals. For some institutions, registering as a “researcher” is as simple as providing photographic proof of identification.

The permission to touch was reflected unevenly among institutions as reported by survey respondents (see Figure 3). Among museums, libraries, archives, and hybrid institutions, museums were the least likely to allow non-researchers to handle objects from the collection (see Figure 4). When the library types represented in the survey responses are grouped together, it becomes evident that libraries are the most likely type of institution to allow this kind of access. All library types reported that they were more likely than not to allow non-researchers to handle text-based objects in their collections. The Head of Exhibitions and Publications at a university library reported:

Anyone is welcome to visit our reading room to see and handle objects from our collections within the reading room. We also host a number of events

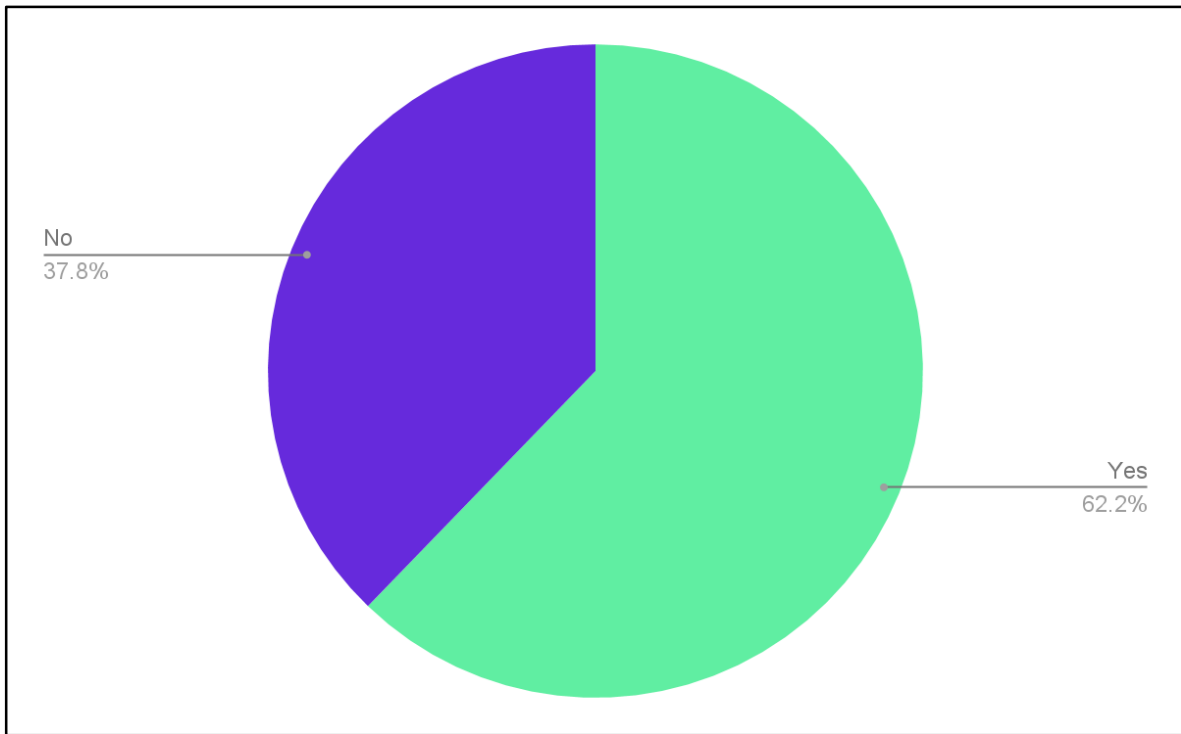


Figure 3. Percentage of institutions that allow non-researchers to handle historical, text-based objects in their collection versus those that do not. (n=45)

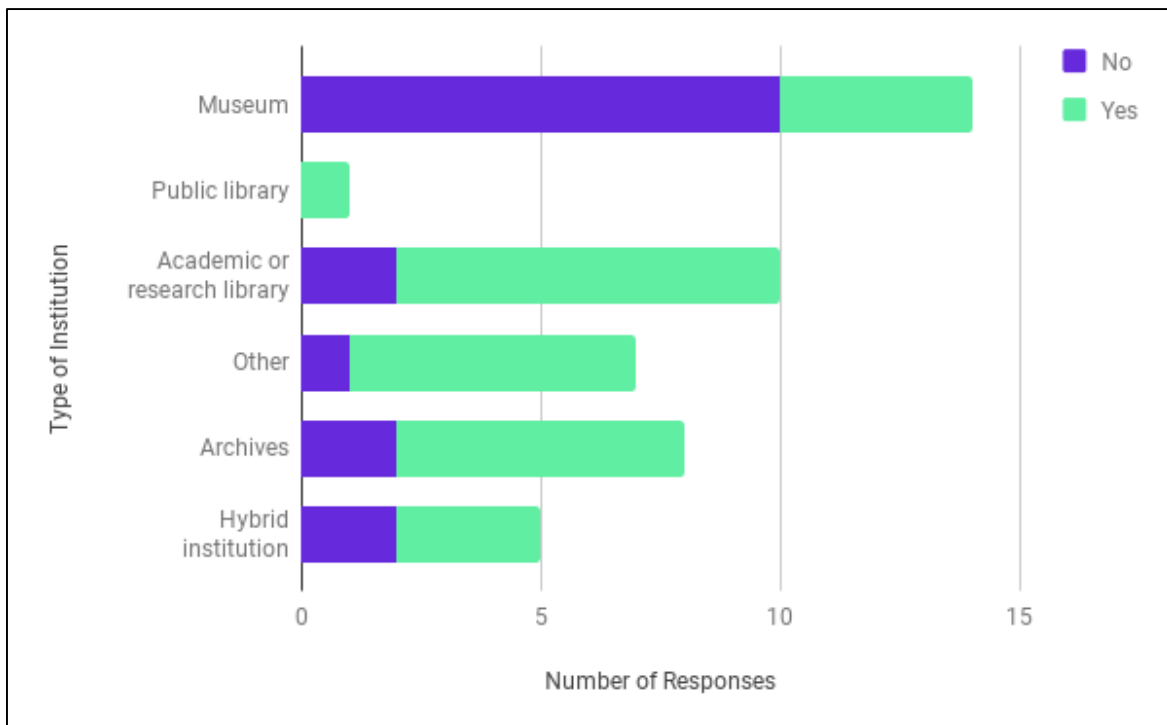


Figure 4. Breakdown by institution of allowance of text-based object handling by non-researchers. (n=45)

throughout the year that showcase different parts of our collection and offer direct interaction with collection items that are open to the public. There is [at] least one staff person present in any of these scenarios. We add more staff as the size of the group/event grows.

In this instance, the policy for open haptic access is applied to both groups in a program setting as well as to individuals in the reading room. Similarly, the Director of Public Engagement at an independent research library stated, “We host hundreds of groups each year, from high school through graduate students as well as seminars for teachers, for hands-on collection presentations personalized to each class's topics. Groups vary from 5 to 30; depending on size we have 1 or more staff ‘watchers,’ plus curators or research staff often lead the presentations.”

Those institutions that do allow the general public to handle collections objects reported a number of approaches towards facilitating these experiences. Generally, these experiences are staff-guided or monitored. They may either take place on an individual basis or within a small group setting. Reported instances of programs that included an opportunity for haptic access included staff-led tours and outreach programs. A number of professionals stated that a teaching collection, rather the institution's permanent collection, was used by educators to allow handling. As one education coordinator working in a museum reported that touch is more likely to occur in “a guided tour pre-tour orientation or in an outreach lesson given at a school, nursing home, service group. The items used by the education coordinator while historical are not part of the permanent collection at the museum archives.” Though not considered valuable enough to be a part of the permanent collection, these expendable texts are still considered to have some educational or experiential worth for a range of audience types.

Institutions in which the policy does not permit handling by non-researchers cited preservation concerns. Interestingly, none of the respondents mentioned the risk of theft as a reason for limiting public access to the realm of the visual. Several reported having adopted different methods to work around this experience barrier. One education director of a museum explained, “The historic documents are too fragile. I have the students merely look at the original text. To enable interaction with the text, I typed up replicas of historic diary entries, and they answer questions.” For this professional, the condition of the collection warrants only visual access but is supplemented by a typographic facsimile. A conservator working in an archive explained that while hands-on access to the collection is limited to researchers, “All stakeholders who enter the reading room are first registered as researchers. Anyone who comes on a tour does not have to register for the tour, but they are not able to handle material.” In other words, in order to gain hands-on access to a collection, a member of the general public needs only to submit to the formal requirement of registering as a researcher.

Though the majority of those surveyed reported that their institution does allow the public to experience historical, text-based objects via touch, this ability does not automatically reward visitors with a meaningful experience. Respondents were asked to respond to the statement, “I believe that non-researchers have meaningful experiences with the historical, text-based objects in my collection.” Overall, survey respondents expressed the belief that non-researchers do have meaningful experiences with their collection. A cross-tabulation of these statements with corresponding approaches towards access reveals that 70.8% of professionals working in institutions that allow haptic access to non-researchers feel strongly that this group has meaningful experiences. While the

degree of agreement was not as strong with professionals that work in institutions that do not allow touch, this group's responses were still generally affirmative (see Figure 5). Of course, it is impossible for those working in a particular institution to pass impartial judgement on the impact of their work. What is of interest to this researcher is not whether or not there is objective truth in these evaluations but whether professionals working with text-based objects see any issues with the way these collections are interpreted and made accessible to the general public. Answers to this prompt suggest that professionals are generally satisfied with the ways in which the general public currently interacts with the objects in their collection, regardless of whether or not they are allowed to physically handle anything.

The survey asked respondents to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement, "I believe that the risk of damaging an object outweighs the potential experiential benefits of allowing non-researchers to touch that object." This question was posed to get a sense of how individuals with a range of professional backgrounds assess the value of beneficial outcomes for non-researchers in relationship to the possibility of negatively altering the condition of an object. The cross-tabulation of these two data sets reveals a number of insights (see Figure 6). Contrary to what might be expected, professionals working in Collection Care were more likely than those in every other field to disagree with this statement. Equally as surprising is the finding that

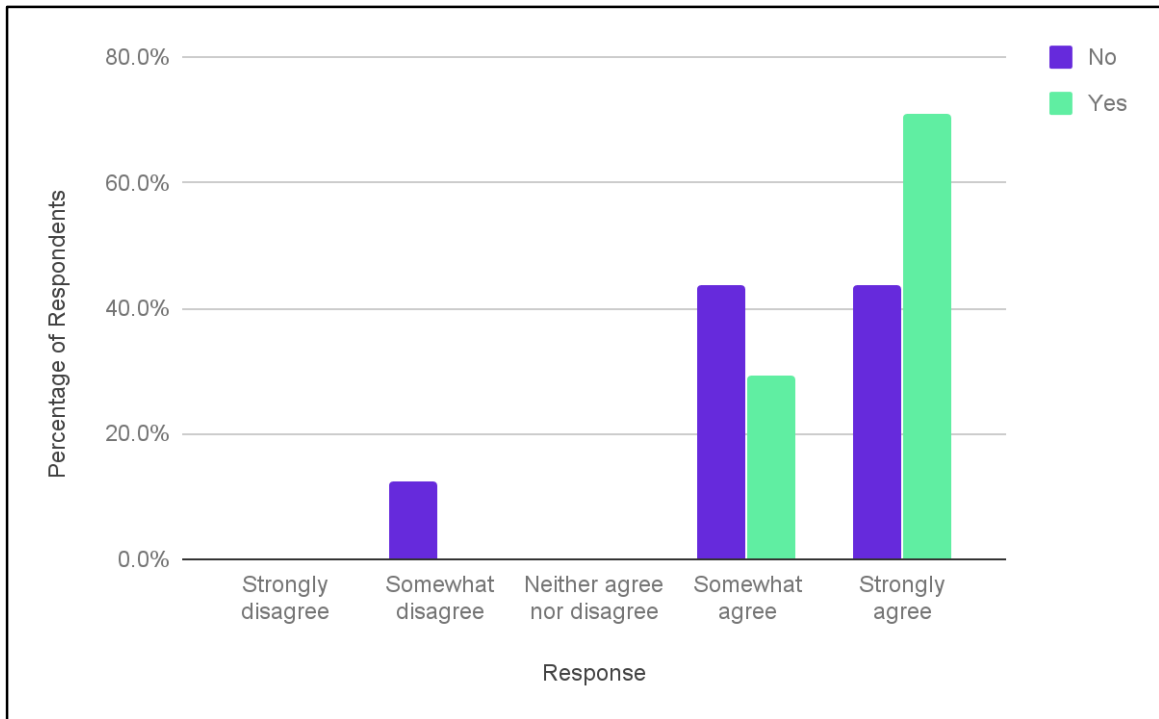


Figure 5. Overall trends in attitudes towards the statement, “I believe that non-researchers have meaningful experiences with the historical, text-based objects in my collection” as related to policy of hands-on access for non-researchers. (n=40)

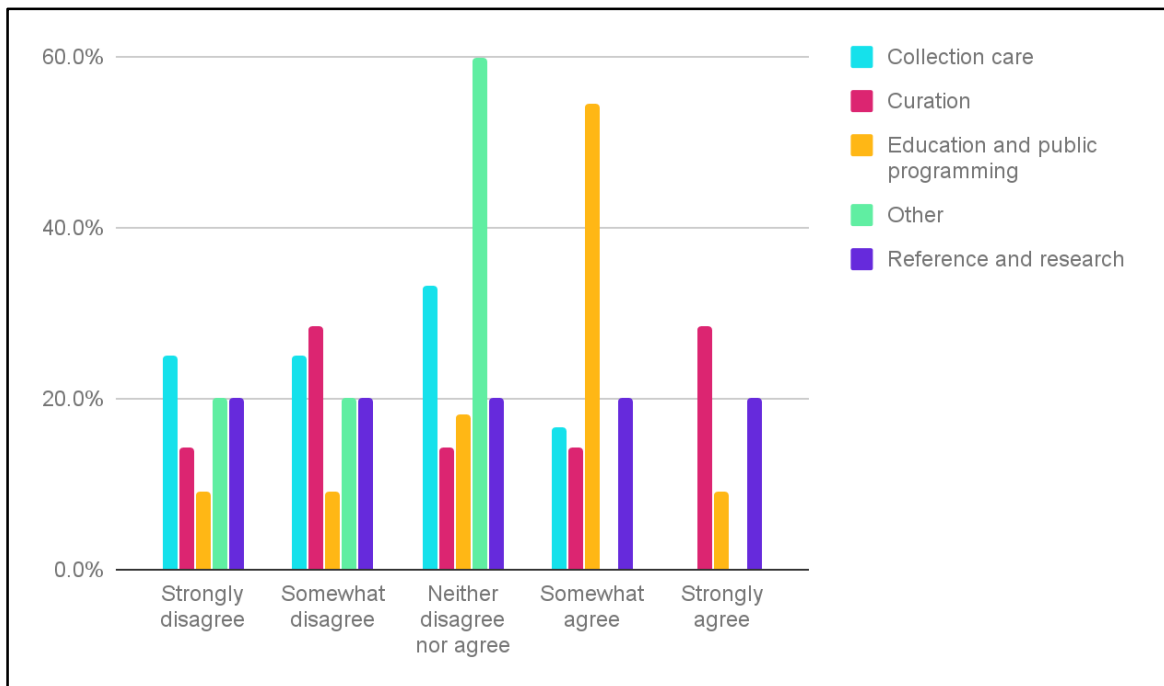


Figure 6: Trends in professional attitudes towards the statement, “I believe that the risk of damaging an object outweighs the potential experiential benefits of allowing non-researchers to touch that object.” (n=40)



individuals working in Education and Public Programming were much more likely to agree, either somewhat or strongly, with this statement. Why might educators, whose job is to design and facilitate meaningful experiences for the public, be more likely to privilege the condition of objects over beneficial outcomes for non-researchers? Survey respondents were not asked to explain their responses, however, the researcher offers some explanations for why this might be the case. The distribution of responses may speak to an unwillingness on the part of those who are charged with actually managing hands-on programs to deal with the fallout if an object *did* get damaged as a result. The results may also reflect a lack of understanding about collections care. Perhaps educators do not have an accurate understanding of the resilience of these materials and are less comfortable with handling procedures. Overall, responses demonstrated a lack of consensus in attitudes towards balancing the benefit of touch for non-researchers with the potential risk of damaging those objects with 27.5% of respondents responding that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the survey statement.

### Case Study of the Rosenbach Museum and Library's Hands-On Tours

#### *Data Analysis*

Located in Philadelphia's historic Rittenhouse Square neighborhood, the Rosenbach Museum and Library was founded in 1954 by Dr. A.S.W. and Philip Rosenbach. The two brothers were preeminent book and fine arts dealers operating through the first half of the twentieth century. Their private collection forms the core of the museum's holdings and the site is located in a townhouse that served as their former residence. Some highlights of the collection include original drawings and books by William Blake, a manuscript version

of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, personal letters of George Washington, and portions of the manuscripts for Charles Dickens's *Pickwick Papers*. In addition to its rare books and manuscripts, the museum showcases a host of fine art objects including specimens of American portraiture, European landscape painting, and decorative art pieces.<sup>89</sup>

Functioning as both a historic house museum and research library, the organization is a hybrid institution that faces the significant challenge of exhibiting a collection that consists primarily of text-based objects. As a means of enhancing the visitor's experience, the museum offers a Hands-On Tour that allows the public to directly handle objects from the collection under the guidance and supervision of a staff member.

The Hands-On Tour was developed in 2006 by curators Judy Guston and Kathy Haas to address the museum's recognition that the existing tour structure was not serving the needs of its visitors<sup>90</sup>. After an extensive renovation project was completed and the building was reopened in 2003, it became clear that the new spatial configuration of the galleries was having a negative impact on visitor experience. Security concerns prevented visitors from moving freely through the space and tours were approaching 1.5 hours in length. As a result, the galleries were rearranged and a supplementary tour was developed in a concerted effort to examine and improve the visitor experience.

The initial supplementary tour, "Off the Shelf," was proposed with the goal of getting visitors closer to objects in the collection without actually permitting them to handle those objects themselves. These tours were originally billed as one-off events and focused on special subject areas such as LGBTQ literature and Judaica. Members of the museum staff

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<sup>89</sup>"Mission and History," The Rosenbach, accessed April 29, 2017, <https://www.rosenbach.org/mission-history>.

<sup>90</sup> Judy Guston, interviewed by Leah Comiskey at the Rosenbach Museum and Library, August 9, 2017.

presented participants with a number of texts centered around the chosen theme and led a conversation around the objects. This format was met with varying degrees of success and Guston and Haas began to push harder for a direct handling experience for their visitors. Though they were initially met with resistance, the curatorial staff was able to pilot the Hands-On Tour format with other members of the museum staff as the audience. The fear of exposing objects to mishandling and theft were addressed in the discussions that attended these model tours. Security measures were tightened and strategies for mitigating the stress on objects were proposed to assuage these concerns. The collections and education departments moved forward to begin presenting Hands-On Tours to the public.

Since their launch in 2006, the Hands-On Tours have retained their initial structure but have changed in the frequency of their offerings and the themes addressed. Today, Hands-On Tours are offered every Friday afternoon. Each tour is scheduled to last for one hour and participants are required to register in advance as the number of visitors is capped at ten per tour. Using manuscripts, letters, and documents that are not usually on view to the public, members of the Rosenbach staff lead discussions around a small number of carefully curated objects that are representative of a theme or the work of a specific author. When asked to describe the impetus for Hands-On Tours, Judy Guston cites her belief in the notion that a museum experience should be the result of a collaborative effort between the museum and the visitor. To Guston, it is important for the Rosenbach's audience to have a participatory experience that allows them to gain an intellectual, physical, and spiritual understanding of a historical object with the guidance of knowledgeable staff. Beyond this understanding of the object itself, her hope is that visitors will be better positioned to recognize why it is that we preserve the things that we do. By

permitting visitors to have physical contact with historical documents, Guston believes visitors are enabled to better comprehend the past, present, and future significance of these objects.

Visitors themselves (68.8%) overwhelmingly described one of their primary objectives for joining a Hands-On Tour as gaining Cognitive Insight concerning the subject being addressed (see Figure 7). They expected to achieve a “depth of knowledge” or to learn “fascinating facts” as a result of their experience. Over half of visitors (53.1%) cited the opportunity for Increased Access as an anticipated benefit. Given that the tour is billed as an opportunity to handle historical artifacts, it is surprising that this number is not higher. The language visitors used to describe this access does not, however, tend to describe a tactile experience but rather an improved visual one. The majority of those who anticipated an opportunity for Increased Access (88.2%), described an opportunity for “up-close viewing” and said they were “eager to see primary source material up close.” Other motivations for attending a Hands-On Tour included opportunities for Positive Social Engagement (the ability “to share a group's excitement for the information,” or “to participate with others who were interested in that same individual that was introduced on the tour” described by 6.3% of respondents), Entertainment (9.4%), and a Sense of Connection to the objects being discussed (3.1%).

Survey participants were asked to describe what, if anything, they felt they had gained as a result of their experience (see Figure 8). Over half of the respondents (61.3%) reported that they felt they had gained Cognitive Insight. This response was reported at a slightly lower rate than anticipated by participants. Only 22.6% interpreted Increased Access as something they felt that they had gained, despite the fact that 88.6% of

participants reported touching an object from the Rosenbach's collection. It seems, then, that visitors understand touch as a means to an end, rather than an experience that is valuable in and of itself. Participants might value the *opportunity* to touch an object over the experience of actually doing so. Of the four Hands-On Tours that this researcher observed, none of the facilitators leading the program invited visitors to discuss the tactile features of the objects being discussed. This researcher suggests that the low percentage of responses in this category may reflect the fact that visitors were not prompted to discuss what they had learned or felt as a direct result of having an object in their hands. Additionally, Entertainment was reported as a perceived benefit (6.9%) with lower frequency than as an anticipated gain. Other categories of beneficial outcomes described by survey respondents, a Sense of Connection (12.9%) and Positive Social Engagement (16.1%), appear to have exceeded the expectations of participants. An additional category, not mentioned by any of the participants in their described expectations, was Positive Affective Benefits as reported by 12.9% of respondents. A feeling of "unparalleled joy" and the effect of being "stunned and thrilled" by the experience was a gain not anticipated by any of the Hands-On Tour participants surveyed.

Guston expressed her belief that, with the insight gained from participating in a Hands-On Tour, visitors feel that they have a place in contributing to the conversation with other visitors and staff, allowing them to be better collaborators. A frequent facilitator herself, Guston has the sense that visitors feel honored to be able to touch something that is generally considered to be important or special. The experience stands out from the visitor's everyday handling of commonplace objects. The unusual nature of the material

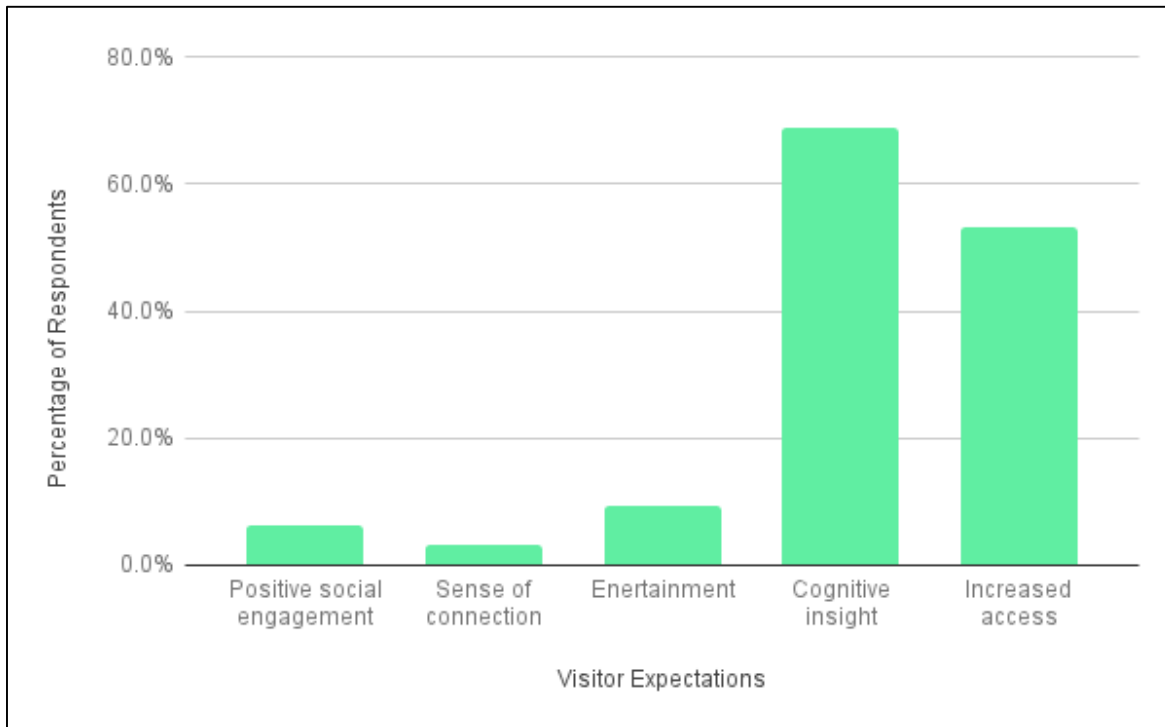


Figure 7. Hands-On Tour participants' expectations of benefits. (n=35)

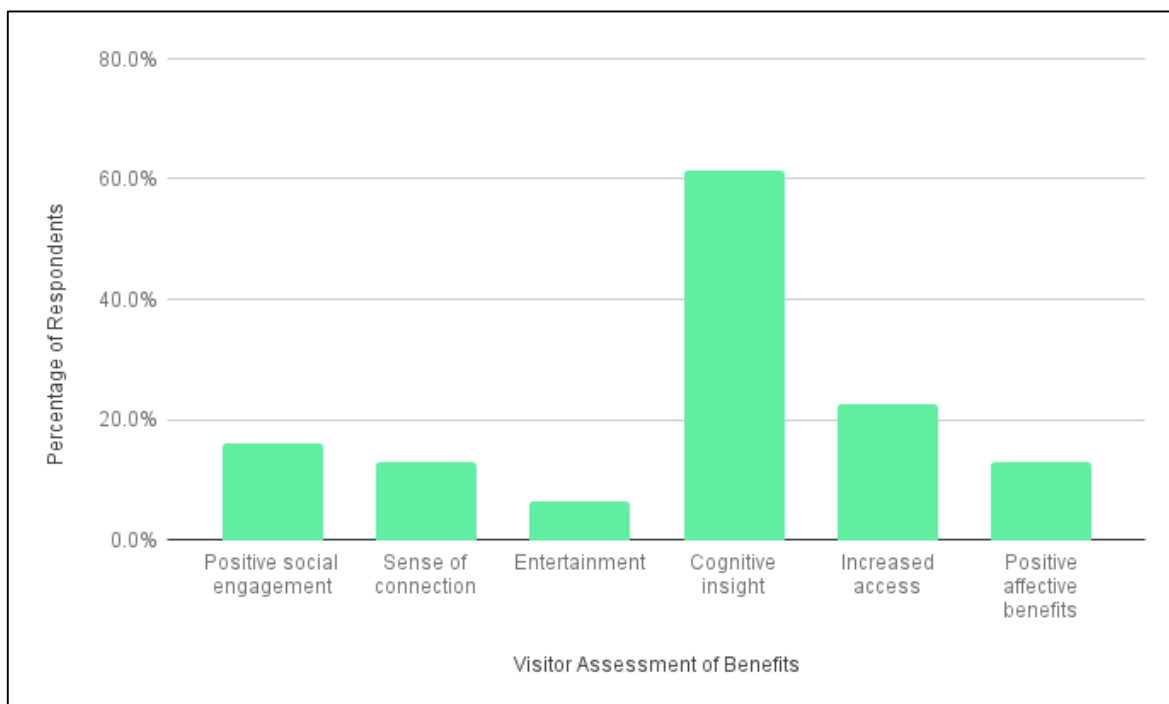


Figure 8. Hands-On Tour participants' descriptions of beneficial outcomes. (n=35)

produces a unique set of sensations that may produce profound effects on the Rosenbach's visitors. For many, Guston says, their sense of the past is enlarged in a way that allows them to feel empathy for a person whose life experiences are often very foreign to their own. The fact that they are authorized to touch these valuable objects appears to convey to visitors that they also have the permission to speak about their experience and to share their observations. More often than not, Guston says, the tours are lively with dialogue among visitors and staff. Guston speculated that this willingness to participate in a discussion may be the result of the types of visitors that these tours tend to attract. Guston's feeling is that the participatory nature of Hands-On Tours attracts a sociable crowd that tends not to shy away from expressing their thoughts.

When asked how the target audience for Hands-On Tours is defined by the Rosenbach, Guston answered that the museum's goal is cultivate a broad demographic that includes young families, couples, and multi-generational groups. Her wish is that there would be no differentiation between the visitors that attend Hands-On Tours and general visitors to the museum. In her experience, she noted, members of the museum appear to be drawn more to lectures and other special programming events and tend not to attend Hands-On Tours. Guston also observed that the audience for Hands-On Tours varied widely with relationship to the tour's featured theme or author. The failure of this particular program to attract a more diverse group is likely the result of scheduling limitations. At this time, tours are only offered on Friday afternoons which bars many working adults from attending.

## Conclusions

The data analysis of results from the survey of professionals shows that there is a lack of consensus among individuals working in museums, libraries, and archives regarding the exposure of collection objects to tactile use by the general public. However, the researcher detected general trends among professions and institutions. Among institutions, libraries and archives are more likely than museums to permit object handling by non-researchers. Among professionals, individuals working in education and public programming were the most likely to feel that the risk of damaging a historic text-based object outweighs the potential for visitors to experience beneficial outcomes that may be related to the experience of touch.

The case study of the Rosenbach Museum's Hands-On Tour reveals that visitors are motivated by a range of expectations regarding their experience including Positive Social Engagement, Cognitive Insight, Increased Access, and a Sense of Connection. As reported by survey participants, the expectations for Positive Social Engagement and a Sense of Connection appear to have been met or exceeded by the program. Visitors reported their belief that they had gained Cognitive Insight, Increased Access, and Entertainment at rates lower than anticipated. Additionally, some visitors reported experiencing Positive Affective Benefits which that they had not anticipated. Finally, the audience attracted to this particular program is lacking in diversity: participants are likely to be white, female, between the ages of 65-74, and highly educated. It is therefore difficult to conclude that these benefits would be recognized by other visitor demographics.



## **Chapter V: Application to the Field**

As the results of the survey of Hands-On Tour (HOT) participants show, visitors described a range of benefits associated with their experience at the Rosenbach Museum and Library (RML). However successful such a program might be, it seems highly improbable that museums will widely adopt the handling policies typically used by archives and libraries with the historical books and documents in their collection. However, the distribution of responses by professionals suggests to the researcher that it is worth initiating a conversation to develop a similar program.

Museums, libraries, and archives all seek both to enable access to and preserve cultural resources for the public. Therefore, if all stakeholders within the institution cannot agree to the expansion of tactile access in public programming, there are likely opportunities for partnerships with those repositories that are better equipped to facilitate these experiences. Partnership programs between museums, libraries, and archives would allow these institutions to combine resources to better serve their intersecting visitor populations. A museum and library might come together to offer a class focused on a current exhibition. The curator of an exhibition at a museum, for example, might deliver a series of lectures on a show's thematic content while pointing to complimentary areas in a partnering library's collection. Following each presentation, participants would receive instruction on proper handling techniques and be led through a discussion of the material qualities of selected objects. The general public, as well as scholars, would greatly benefit from seeing the collections held by partnering institutions in a more direct dialogue with each other.

The results of this study further indicate that visitors to text-based collections may be satisfied with the opportunity to look at, but not handle, objects outside of a case. If a program that facilitates touch cannot be supported, one that simply features a professional handling an object in front of visitors may be enough to provide some of the experiential benefits described by the HOT survey participants. Such an experience would retain the intimate quality of the HOT while avoiding the risk of damage incurred by inexperienced or excessive handling.

As the data collected by the survey of professionals show, individuals specializing in education and public programming are more likely to feel that the risk of damaging an object outweighs the potential for visitors to experience beneficial outcomes that are the result of manual access. Though it disproves the researcher's initial assumption that the education community would be more likely than individuals in curation and conservation to support this form of engagement, this finding may be partially explained by a general lack of experience in object-handling by those working in education. Without having developed this skill themselves, individuals might be reluctant to manage and facilitate this type of program for a public audience. Therefore, the researcher suggests that educators be given the opportunity to receive training in object-handling procedures.

## Chapter VI: Implications for Further Research

While the research for this thesis did point to a lack of consensus among museum professionals concerning the use of touch as an interpretive tool for the general public, it did not gather substantial data concerning why this might be the case. The size of the institution under which an individual is employed is one factor that may have affected the positions reported by professionals. When conducting preliminary research on this topic, it was suggested to the researcher that those working for smaller institutions may be less inclined to allow the general public to handle objects. It was this archivist's hypothesis that professionals in these environments are more emotionally attached to the objects in their collections, in part because there are fewer objects, and that this causes them to be more cautious in their approach to access.<sup>91</sup> Related to this issue is the fact that in-house conservators are almost always employed by larger institutions who can afford to pay them. Thus, collections care respondents to the researcher's survey likely work in larger institutions. Are individuals employed by smaller institutions more or less likely to support opportunities for haptic engagement by the public? Additionally, the survey excluded individuals working in regional conservation centers who may feel differently than their colleagues who have ties to specific collections about public access to historical objects. Lastly, individual responses may have a correlation with the length of time that professional has worked in the field. Does their lack or wealth of experience also have an effect on the attitudes of professionals towards this issue?

The case study of the Rosenbach Museum and Library's Hands-On Tour (HOT) provides an in-depth analysis of haptic engagement from the perspective of a single

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<sup>91</sup> Cary Hutto, interviewed by Leah Comiskey at the Historical Society of Philadelphia, August 5, 2017.

institution and its particular audiences. Additional case studies would enrich the field's understanding of the challenges and opportunities that accompany this type of programming. To build on this case study, the researcher suggests performing an analysis of the desired and experienced outcomes by visitors who have not participated in a HOT. How do these descriptions compare with those that have had the opportunity to handle objects from the collection in this setting? By comparing the aggregate responses of these groups, one may be in a better position to judge the effects of haptic engagement on visitor experiences.

Both the case study of the Hands-On Tour and the study of professional and institutional attitudes towards touch focused on its use as an interpretive method by adult audiences. However, it is certainly possible that younger visitors would benefit from the same opportunities. It also seems likely that professionals would express different beliefs concerning the prudence of allowing children or young adults to handle historic, text-based objects but this assumption should be tested with further research. Additionally, future studies might analyze the employment of other senses—such as smell, taste, and hearing—in programming that centers around text-based collections.

Finally, many institutions have adopted the use of digital surrogates and print facsimiles to facilitate access to text-based objects that are considered too valuable or too fragile to handle. This thesis did not seek to test the efficacy of those interpretive tools nor did it seek to understand institutional and professional attitudes concerning their use. A future study could address the use of these substitutive materials across the institutions included in this analysis.

## Appendix A: Hands-On Tour Participant Survey

1. How often do you visit the Rosenbach Museum and Library?
  - a. Less than annually
  - b. Annually
  - c. Semi-annually
  - d. Monthly
  - e. Weekly
2. Did you have prior knowledge of any of the subject matter featured in the Hands-On Tour?
3. If yes, describe the nature of your prior knowledge.
4. During the Hands-On Tour, did you touch an object from the museum's collection?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
5. Describe what you expected to gain from participating in a Hands-On Tour.
6. Describe what, if anything, you feel you have gained from participating in a Hands-On Tour.
7. What is your age?
  - a. 18-24
  - b. 25-34
  - c. 35-44
  - d. 45-54
  - e. 55-64
  - f. 65-74
  - g. 75+
8. Which race, if any, do you identify as?
  - a. Black or African American
  - b. Hispanic or Latino
  - c. White or Caucasian

- d. Asian / Pacific Islander
- e. Native American
- f. Prefer not to answer
- g. Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- a. High school or GED
- b. Some college
- c. Bachelor's or Associate's degree
- d. Post-graduate degree
- e. Prefer not to answer

10. Which gender, if any, do you identify as?

- a. Female
- b. Male
- c. Prefer not to answer
- d. Other \_\_\_\_\_

11. What is your zip code?

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Judy Guston Interview Script

1. Tell me about the development of Hands-On Tours. When and why did the museum begin to offer them?
2. What are the Rosenbach Museum's goals and objectives for Hands-On Tours? What type of experience is the museum aiming to provide for visitors to this program?
3. How do these goals and objectives differ from those that guide your exhibitions?
4. How are Hands-On Tours facilitated (objects used, staff involved, duration, group size...)?
5. What measures are in place to insure object safety during public handling?
6. Describe your primary visitor demographic. How does this demographic compare with the intended audience for Hands-On Tours?
7. How does the Rosenbach Museum decide what objects may be used for Hands-On Tours?
8. What are the potential problems that other literary museums and archives might encounter when implementing a program similar to Hands-On Tours?

## Appendix C: Museum, Library, and Archive Professionals Survey

1. In which type of institution do you work?

- a. Public library
- b. College or university library
- c. Archive
- d. Museum
- e. Other (please specify)

2. What is your job title?

3. Describe your institution's primary and secondary audiences.

4. What do you hope visitors will gain from experiencing your collection?

5. Non-researchers may experience historical, text-based objects in your collection with the aid of (select all that apply):

- a. Text panels and labels
- b. Guided tours
- c. Digital media
- d. Online archives
- e. Something else

6. Are non-researchers allowed to handle any of the historical, text-based objects in your collection?

- a. Yes
- b. No

7. If yes, how is this experience facilitated (objects used, staff involved, duration, group size...)? If no, why not?

8. I believe that the risk of damaging an object outweighs the potential experiential benefits of allowing non-researchers to touch that object.

Strongly disagree   Somewhat disagree   Neither disagree nor agree   Somewhat agree   Strongly agree

9. I believe that non-researchers have meaningful experiences with the historical, text-based objects in my collection.

Strongly disagree   Somewhat disagree   Neither disagree nor agree   Somewhat agree   Strongly agree



## Appendix D: Survey of Professionals Responses

### 1. In which type of institution do you work?

#	Answer	
1	Museum	
2	Other (please specify)	Non profit Research Library
3	Archive	
4	Museum	
5	Museum	
6	Museum	
7	Museum	
8	Other (please specify)	Museum and Archive
9	College or university library	
10	Other (please specify)	Special Collections Library with exhibition space
11	Public library	
12	Archive	
13	Archive	
14	Archive	
15	Archive	
16	College or university library	
17	Archive	
18	Museum	
19	College or university library	
20	Museum	
21	Museum	
22	Archive	
23	Museum	
24	Museum	
25	Museum	
26	Other (please specify)	Museum and Archive
27	Other (please specify)	Art museum's special collections library's archive
28	Other (please specify)	Independent research library
29	Other (please specify)	Independent school
30	Archive	
31	Archive	
32	College or university library	
33	College or university library	
34	Archive	
35	College or university library	
36	Other (please specify)	Archive adn Museum

37	Other (please specify)	Private Library
38	Other (please specify)	Scientific Library
39	Other (please specify)	also research institution with museum galleries
40	Other (please specify)	independent membership library
41	College or university library	
42	Other (please specify)	Research library and museum
43	Museum	
44	College or university library	
45	Museum	
46	College or university library	
47	Museum	
48	Other (please specify)	private library with circulating & rare books and art
49	Museum	
50	Other (please specify)	Membership library

## 2. What is your job title?

#	Answer
1	Curator
2	Head of Conservation
3	Archivist
4	Education Coordinator
5	Museum Technician
6	Marketing Coordinator
7	Education & Outreach Coordinator
8	Education and Volunteer Manager
9	Curator of Ancient and Medieval Manuscripts
10	Manager, Visitor Education Programs
11	Library Conservator
12	
13	Conservator
14	Senior Conservator
15	conservator
16	Museum Studies Masters Candidate
17	Associate book and paper conservator
18	Education Assistant
19	Head of Exhibitions and Publications
20	Education Director
21	Museum Curator
22	Assistant Archivist
23	curator
24	Manager of Education
25	Deputy Director
26	Director
27	manuscript processor
28	Director of Public Engagement
29	Curator of Special Collections
30	
31	Manager, Preservation Services
32	collection care team leader
33	conservator
34	Head Conservator
35	Senior Book Conservator
36	Head of Reference and Research
37	Conservation Technician
38	Librarian
39	book conservator
40	curator of rare books and manuscripts

41	Head, Dept of Preservation & Conservation
42	Curator
43	Archivist
44	Curator of Special Collections and Rare Books
45	Museum Education Coordinator
46	Curator of Programs
47	Director of Exhibitions
48	Head of Reader Services
49	Coordinator of outreach education
50	Director of Education

3. Describe your institution's primary and secondary audiences.

#	Answer
1	Local residents, students, tourists
2	Scholars, Researchers Secondary: Public in the exhibition gallery
3	General public, university students and staff
4	Adults School age children
5	Children Adults
6	New York City residents and tourists (international and national)
7	Excellent question. I have been trying to get my boss and board members to discuss this topic but, they don't seem to think that this is a priority.
8	History buffs looking to reminisce and families
9	The University Community and the general public.
10	The primary audience is the general public (of all ages), ranging from Shakespeare enthusiasts to those just curious about the humanities and find themselves on Capitol Hill. Our secondary audience is scholars studying Shakespeare, Theatre history, the Early Modern period, and more.
11	Members of the public, students, researchers.
12	College students + the general public
13	The public and government bodies
14	Genealogical researchers; press; historical, legal researchers
15	Researchers of our state archives for historic and genealogical research, legal records.
16	Students, Faculty and staff
17	Genealogical researchers and school groups
18	1st: Students, 2nd: families
19	Primary: scholars Secondary: public
20	Primary audiences: School children Secondary Audiences: Adult Tour groups
21	Residents of Lacey, WA -- all ages Tourists
22	University faculty, students, and amateur researchers
23	general public
24	All audiences
25	Adults, children, families, educators in central South Carolina. Same but for the southeastern region.
26	Widest possible audience
27	art museum patrons, adults, scholars
28	Scholars doing research in the humanities; those studying genealogy and other members of the general public
29	Students, faculty, school community, and community at large.
30	
31	Government (accountability, legal, ...) Individuals (personal research, genealogy, academic,...)
32	students and public
33	undergraduate and graduate researchers

34	Primary - researchers and scholars Secondary - sponsors
35	undergraduate students graduate students
36	Primary onsite readers and offsite researchers, secondary classrooms and galleries (IMO)
37	1. Our private members (tends to be an older crowd) 2. General public
38	Researchers, students etc in the field of conservation and restoration of cultural heritage
39	Congress and the citizens of the US
40	members and researchers
41	1. University students, faculty, and staff 2. Researchers worldwide
42	For the library: scholars; for the museum: general public
43	Our main audience tends to be out-of-county visitors and tourists to the Central Coast of CA. Secondly, we work with middle- and high-school aged students to bring them to the museum on class trips or as educational enrichment
44	Primary: undergraduate and graduate students, faculty. Secondary: general public, K-12 students, teachers, allied institutions and staff from other cultural memory organizations.
45	Tourists and local populations (in the 19106 area)
46	Scholars, faculty, students, general public
47	Chicagoans. National and international active citizens.
48	our membership, researchers, and visitors
49	community members interested in connecting culturally with the Russian culture
50	Primary audience is members--largely professional and retired adults who are intellectually curious, bibliophiles, and/or seeking quiet space for work, reading, and reflection. Secondary audience--public visitors, academic groups, researchers; these folks are a diverse mix of people who use the library for a range of purposes, from casual visits to see the building's architecture to academic researchers who come to use specific materials from special collections.

4. What do you hope visitors will gain from experiencing your collection?

	Answer
1	a better understanding of local history
2	Educational, learning about the collection in various ways.
3	Knowledge of local history
4	An appreciation for local history.
5	Knowledge Happiness
6	A renewed or new appreciation for the complexity of modern and contemporary art, make connections with what's on view to their personal lives, and feel inspired by the works from the collection
7	My boss doesn't believe in logic models or defining set outcomes so, sadly, I can't answer this question
8	A greater knowledge/understanding of the history within the local area
9	
10	We hope that they will gain a deeper appreciation for the importance of the humanities, feel a connection to our collection in relation to their own lives and passions, and feel completely at home at our institution no matter their background or experience.
11	A sense of self and appreciation of the history of our nation.
12	
13	We hope they will be able to gain access to documents relevant to their area of research, be it legal cases, genealogical research, or research for a publication etc.
14	Intellectual information, sense of history, information from handling artifact
15	In addition to the hopeful fulfillment of the primary research need, have a small changing exhibit, and we offer programming we hope they'll return for: talks, workshops, and social media
16	
17	An appreciation for and interest in history
18	An appreciation of history, of cultural pride, of diversity and challenges within a specific culture, and of object-based learning
19	To learn something that was not already known and to spark their interest in the topic/collections we display.
20	A greater appreciation for American history.
21	Understand more about the people who lived here before and the interesting stories about people that can be told through objects.
22	regional knowledge
23	local and family historical knowledge
24	A love of art
25	Following a path of curiosity and inspiration.
26	A better understanding of and connection with our storyline, subject, and the stories we tell.
27	Hope that by using our collection they will add to their area of scholarship
28	An appreciation of human culture

29	Being in the presence of the objects, understanding them in context of teaching and learning, seeing them in new contexts.
30	
31	learn more than they came for
32	Knowledge, connection with Manchester,
33	research
34	Knowledge on the content of the documents.
35	constructive research
36	The tools and insights to write scholarly and non-scholarly books, articles, prepare exhibits; to learn about the world and themselves; to engage historical documents and artifacts in meaningful ways; and so on.
37	We offer cultural experiences. Books to loan, Authors talks, chamber music, as well as historical records.
38	Answers to their questions and curiosity
39	An appreciation of cultural items from the US and the world that are considered important by the US government.
40	the enjoyment of books and answers to various research questions
41	Learning and advancement of knowledge
42	Collection- and idea-based engagement in four broad areas: (1) cognitive, i.e., learning; (2) aesthetic, i.e., response to works of art; (3) affective, i.e., finding meaning/inspiration; (4) social, i.e., impetus to engage with others
43	I hope they will understand, generally, that literature can reflect the past and present simultaneously. Specifically, I hope they understand John Steinbeck's unique ability to have told site and time specific stories, while still reflecting universal human experiences and concerns.
44	Necessary information to assist in completing whatever project they're working on; excellent service; serendipitous inspiration from discovering related, unknown materials; a sense of having learned new things; delight and wonder.
45	An understanding of the importance of document-based collections and the stories they tell. We hope guests move beyond the sense that documents are dusty old things stored on shelves.
46	how important special collections are to understanding our present world
47	That people need to be active citizens.
48	appreciation for collections and satisfaction of intellectual curiosity
49	understanding of the cultural context out of which current Russian life comes.
50	We hope: --visitors find connections between historic materials and their contemporary lives --visitors' curiosity is sparked --visitors are inspired to learn more through other library resources



5. Non-researchers may experience historical, text-based objects in your collection with the aid of (select all that apply):

#	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	Something else
1	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media		Online exhibition
2					
3	Text panels and labels	Guided tours			
4	Text panels and labels		Digital media		
5					
6	Text panels and labels				
7	Text panels and labels	Guided tours			
8					
9	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media		
10	Text panels and labels		Digital media	Online archives	
11	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	
12	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	
13				Online archives	
14	Text panels and labels		Digital media	Online archives	a talk occasionally coincides with exhibit content
15					
16	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	
17	Text panels and labels	Guided tours			
18	Text panels and labels		Digital media	Online archives	Reading room visits
19		Guided tours			
20	Text panels and labels	Guided tours		Online archives	
21		Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	

22	Text panels and labels				
23	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media		
24	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	Hands on activities, lots of multidisciplinary programming, printed guides, reading rooms, unique community partnerships
25	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	
26				Online archives	OPAC, blog, social media, online finding aids
27	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	
28	Text panels and labels		Digital media	Online archives	
29					
30	Text panels and labels	Guided tours		Online archives	
31	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media		
32			Digital media	Online archives	
33		Guided tours			
34	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media		
35	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	
36				Online archives	Asking the staff is the main way. Also old school card catalogue.
37	Text panels and labels	Guided tours		Online archives	
38	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	
39	Text panels and	Guided	Digital		

	labels	tours	media		
40	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	Public lectures and events
41	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	Public programs, class visits, web presentations, audio, etc.
42	Text panels and labels	Guided tours			In person archival displays, scheduled in advance for tour groups or for special events.
43	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	Exhibits
44	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	
45	Text panels and labels		Digital media	Online archives	hands on consultation
46	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	
47	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	interaction with librarians and curators
48	Text panels and labels	Guided tours			
49			Digital media	Online archives	Their own research appointments; research appointments are open to anyone, not just academic scholars Programs based on special collections materials Much of our open shelf material that is available to members is historical in

					nature
50	Text panels and labels	Guided tours	Digital media	Online archives	Something else

6. Are non-researchers allowed to handle any of the historical, text-based objects in your collection?

#	Answer
1	Yes
2	No
3	
4	Yes
5	No
6	
7	No
8	Yes
9	
10	No
11	Yes
12	Yes
13	No
14	Yes
15	Yes
16	
17	No
18	No
19	Yes
20	No
21	No
22	Yes
23	No
24	No
25	Yes
26	No
27	Yes
28	Yes
29	Yes
30	
31	Yes
32	No
33	Yes
34	Yes
35	Yes
36	Yes
37	Yes
38	Yes
39	Yes
40	Yes

41	Yes
42	No
43	No
44	Yes
45	Yes
46	Yes
47	No
48	Yes
49	No
50	Yes

7. If yes, how is this experience facilitated (objects used, staff involved, duration, group size...)? If no, why not?

#	Answer
1	Education collection
2	Anybody who will handle rare material will get training first.
3	
4	This is more likely to happen in a guided tour pre-tour orientation or in an outreach lesson given at a school, nursing home, service group. The items used by the education coordinator while historical are not part of the permanent collection at the museum archives.
5	
6	
7	
8	Staff help visitors in the research library with primary documents - staff can pull artifacts to be handled by the public and the public can also pull from the reference collection themselves. Also, the education department has their own collection of materials that are handed around during tours
9	
10	
11	Individual use. Staff guided and monitored if fragile. Not accessible if very damaged.
12	
13	All stakeholders who enter the reading room are first registered as researchers. Anyone who comes on a tour does not have to register for the tour, but they are not able to handle material.
14	Computer-based training required before researcher card processed; archival staff present at all times in research room; archival staff actively monitor research room
15	I'm subbing "searchroom patron" for researcher. If necessary, viewing of a collection might come with an assisting staff member. Condition might curtail use. Scanning reduces physical use of many originals, which is, in my view, a good thing.
16	
17	We are a historical society, which includes state archives, a library, and a museum collection. Generally, patrons can access objects via the library (in which case they qualify as researchers), but they can also view items in the museum context.
18	With school groups, we have replicas of text-based objects for students to handle instead.
19	Staff supervised reading room visits or tours. Anyone is welcome to visit our reading room to see and handle objects from our collections within the reading room. We also host a number of events throughout the year that showcase different parts of our collection and offer direct interaction with collection items that are open to the public. There is least one staff person present in any of these scenarios. We add more staff as the size of the group/event grows.
20	The historic documents are too fragile. I have the students merely look at the original text. To enable interaction with the text, I typed up replicas of historic diary entries, and they answer questions.

21	
22	We give tours to university classes- a few history/anthropology classes and a few photography classes
23	
24	
25	Staff involved - I am not sure how you are defining non-researchers. For example, our exhibition staff does not research the collection, but they handle it quite often. It is rare that non-staff or volunteers handle works in the collection.
26	
27	Reading room is open to the public on certain days, we have closed stacks, but anyone can request to see/use our materials. Minimum of one staff person in the reading room at all times, patrons must follow procedures (written) for handling materials
28	We host hundreds of groups each year, from high school through graduate students as well as seminars for teachers, for hands-on collection presentations personalized to each class's topics. Groups vary from 5 to 30; depending on size we have 1 or more staff "watchers," plus curators or research staff often lead the presentations.
29	Our primary purpose is to support curriculum. Students have access to Archives & Special Collections either through class or by special appointment, but never unsupervised.
30	
31	Must be part of staff-facilitated tour if not signed in as individual researchers. Items for hands-on tour vetted by a conservator, hands-on group size is limited and they are infrequent.
32	We have collection encounters with original items displayed in an informal way, but the public is not allowed to handle special collections without having a specific reason finalized to research
33	individual research supervised by staff
34	Manuscripts are provided upon request and permission granted. Staff assist researchers. The duration is unlimited.
35	any one with a photo ID can register to request collection material and view it in the reading room, it could be a student who wants to see an family diary from the 19th century or a member of the public. Users don't have to represent themselves as researchers
36	Classrooms, objects depend on the subject area of the class or tour; staff are involved in degrees, from set-up only to full choice of materials and presentation/interpretation of same. Without a definition of "Non-researcher" it's difficult to know what you mean as our Reading Room experience high visitation by "drop-ins" or "tourists" interested in specific collections as fans, or pilgrims. They have direct access to a wide range of archival materials.
37	Upon request we may indulge a curious passerby. We also often give tours and the like.
38	Even if they are classified as "rare books" the state of conservation is rather stable, library users are allowed to consult all kind of publications. For some audiovisual materials ( videos, CD, microfiches) library staff needs to provide assistance.



39	During tours they may be allowed to touch some items.
40	members may borrow the great majority of our books and visitors may examine some of them
41	1. Check out circulating books directly or via inter-library loan 2. Consult Special Collections in monitored reading room (2 staff on duty) 3. View/handle material in group event; usually at least two staff monitoring use and maybe more for larger event
42	We limit handling due to preservation concerns
43	This is a difficult question. In certain cases and at certain times I have allowed non-researchers to handle historical, text-based objects, but usually with limitations and not as a regular practice. I usually try to use items that aren't too fragile, or use protective materials (page protectors, etc.).
44	Staff mediated, usually part of a tour, group session, or outreach activity held in one of our classrooms or conference spaces.
45	It is always a facilitated and pre-organized experience. The experience is a tour that usually lasts around 45 minutes or longer and involves both museum and library staff.
46	small groups, staff present
47	
48	class sizes are held to 15 because of space. Books, prints, maps, etc. Duration depends
49	
50	Open shelf material that is open to member use is able to be handled on an individual basis without facilitation Occasionally we have programming that encourages members and visitors to get up close to printed material and sometimes these experiences include the opportunity to turn pages and otherwise handle materials. These are facilitated with staff supervision and usually revolve around a single or few objects during a conversation on a specific topic or theme.

8. I believe that the risk of damaging an object outweighs the potential experiential benefits of allowing non-researchers to touch that object.

#	Answer
1	
2	Neither disagree nor agree
3	
4	Somewhat agree
5	Neither disagree nor agree
6	
7	Somewhat disagree
8	Somewhat agree
9	
10	Somewhat agree
11	Strongly disagree
12	Somewhat disagree
13	Somewhat disagree
14	Strongly disagree
15	
16	
17	Neither disagree nor agree
18	Strongly agree
19	Strongly disagree
20	Somewhat agree
21	Strongly agree
22	Strongly agree
23	Somewhat agree
24	Neither disagree nor agree
25	Neither disagree nor agree
26	Neither disagree nor agree
27	Neither disagree nor agree
28	Strongly disagree
29	Strongly agree
30	
31	Neither disagree nor agree
32	Somewhat agree
33	
34	
35	Strongly disagree
36	Somewhat agree
37	Somewhat disagree
38	Strongly disagree
39	Somewhat agree
40	Strongly disagree

41	Somewhat disagree
42	Neither disagree nor agree
43	Somewhat disagree
44	Somewhat disagree
45	Somewhat agree
46	Somewhat disagree
47	
48	Neither disagree nor agree
49	Somewhat agree
50	Neither disagree nor agree

9. I believe that non-researchers have meaningful experiences with the historical, text-based objects in my collection.

#	Answer
1	
2	Strongly agree
3	
4	Strongly agree
5	Strongly agree
6	
7	Somewhat disagree
8	Strongly agree
9	
10	Strongly agree
11	Somewhat agree
12	Somewhat agree
13	Somewhat agree
14	Strongly agree
15	
16	
17	Strongly agree
18	Somewhat agree
19	Strongly agree
20	Strongly agree
21	Somewhat disagree
22	Somewhat agree
23	Somewhat agree
24	Somewhat agree
25	Strongly agree
26	Somewhat agree
27	Somewhat agree
28	Strongly agree
29	Strongly agree
30	
31	Strongly agree
32	Somewhat agree
33	
34	
35	Strongly agree
36	Somewhat agree
37	Strongly agree
38	Somewhat agree
39	Strongly agree
40	Strongly agree

41	Strongly agree
42	Strongly agree
43	Somewhat agree
44	Somewhat agree
45	Strongly agree
46	Strongly agree
47	
48	Strongly agree
49	Strongly agree
50	Strongly agree

10. If you agree, how do you describe these experiences?

#	Answer
1	
2	
3	
4	I believe they react with pleasure to holding an actual object in their hands. Examples of such objects I have and use include: greeting cards, school books, homework assignments from the 1800s, mail order catalogs.
5	
6	
7	
8	First, it really depends on the condition of the object/artifact and its significance to the overall collection. Some items are extremely fragile and should not be handled often to ensure the condition of the artifact. Secondly, I work at a local historical society, so many of the things in our collection have stories that are rooted to a very local community; if we don't show those items and people don't make personal connections with our organization, we wouldn't be able to sustain. Yearbooks seem to be the most popular/used resources in our collection because people really want to reminisce.
9	
10	Depending on the condition and rarity of a book, it is worth the risk to allow a non-researcher to get close enough to an object to form a real connection with history and the humanities. We are expanding our criteria for those who can become researchers, to artists, classroom teachers, and even high school students. So while a non-researcher cannot handle an object at this time, our definition of researcher is much wider than many similar institutions. We are looking into ways that we can get more people connecting to the collection in meaningful ways while keeping the preservation of materials in mind.
11	Appreciation for the real genuine artifact.
12	
13	The requirement to become a researcher is very easy at my institution; the term is quite open. So anyone can become a researcher and thus have full access to and benefit from our collection
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	Students express surprise and excitement at being able to learn about the past by handling replicas. Additionally, students are often interested in the difference between artifacts and replicas and enjoy hearing about the processes that created the replicas.
19	Sometimes history or scholarship seems vague or abstract but when you allow the general public to interact directly with collection items it makes history and ideas more concrete.

20	
21	
22	Photography students who take our tour are seeing different types of photographs for the first time- Daguerreotype, Carte de Visite, and Tintype.
23	
24	Mostly visually - through seeing and experiencing art
25	I believe touching objects is definitely something that can be very engaging for audiences; however, that does not preclude the considerations we must make when we have to conserve and care for objects. We can take greater risks with some types of objects in an art museum. We must be innovative in solving this conundrum. For example, we can simulate a hands on experience by creating "like" objects for exploration. For example, we can create a fresco or egg tempura Renaissance-style painting in stages for visitors to explore texture and see technique, but it would be irresponsible of us to leave a 15th-century work out for handling. This approach allows us to have partnerships with local artists or university art departments. It is then a bigger win.
26	Seeing the real thing - the power of the authentic
27	Someone who sees an object in person or online and has their interest peaked enough so that they then come and visit to see what else you have
28	In a digital age, there's something magical when high school students actually turn the pages of a medieval manuscript and realize the book is 1,000 years old and has been used by hundreds of people over that time period. The tactile experience of a book - its size, weight, materials, the way the light touches the page - cannot be duplicated by even the most high-resolution imaging.
29	For students whose world is so digital, experiencing an object first-hand is key--the way it feels, smells, the power it has.]
30	
31	Almost all handling is by registered researchers so they (and staff) will be responsible for most damage related to handling. Most users appreciate access to original records and many experience the records differently from images of the same records. Most of the time the risk can be managed. [I don't understand the emphasis on non-researchers when they are a tiny fraction of our users - I suspect that there are different definitions of "researchers," "touch," "risk," "damage," and "experiences"]
32	Familiarise with a special collection could be a revealing experience, as it involves handling materials often not familiar to the public, and generally unique and very precious
33	
34	
35	People find value in connecting with primary sources, both emotional and intellectual. They get excited about libraries and history.
36	A range of engagement and emotions: from awe to who cares.
37	The point of preservation is to engage the public in primary source historical evidence. It is worth risk to the object to share that experience so long as it is done in a thoughtful way.

38	Improves knowledge, increases curiosity, strengthens self confidence
39	If an expert conducts a tour of an object by describing its most interesting features and characteristics while both non-researcher and expert are in close proximity to the item, the non-researcher will go away with an equally if not greater understanding and experience of the item. A painting does not have to be touched to have a meaningful experience, and that is the same with a handwritten manuscript.
40	Members take our books home and visitors can pull books off the shelves to look at them
41	The experience very much depends on the specific circumstance and person, but typically either (1) a strengthened emotional connection and empathy for historic events and cultures; or (2) increased understanding of the materials of a culture or era.
42	Can't answer question 8 the way you've posed it because the issues are too complex. Question 9: extensive interviews with visitors reveal deep engagement in the four key areas (cognitive, aesthetic, affective, and social); but inability to touch objects is definitely a barrier to deeper engagement.
43	I've worked with a number of groups that are fascinated by seeing Steinbeck's handwriting, or old books from his family's library. The text itself seems to matter less than the fact it is HIS handwriting or HIS book (Steinbeck's handwriting is difficult to read, so few actually read it, but look at it and appreciate it).
44	As a sense of surprise and delight in discovering we have items they didn't know we had; of wanting to come back and see more items; in curiosity about other public programming we might offer that helps expose and interpret materials from the collections.
45	Text-based objects, when shown in museums or when provided during facilitated experiences, receive the same treatment from guests as "normal" museum objects do. The guests look on them with an interesting reverence.
46	there is nothing like a direct encounter with an historic object. It brings history to life.
47	
48	
49	The tags are usually descriptive; people come with little prior knowledge of Russian culture/context and so gain much through our exhibits.
50	Our members are constantly using materials from the open shelf, and our digital collections provide access to rare materials not only for our members but anyone with an internet connection. Teachers use materials to develop lesson plans, artists use materials for inspiration for their own work, authors use materials to inform their writing, and members come to learn about treasures in the collection.



## Appendix E: Survey of Hands-On Tour Participants Responses

### 1. How often do you visit the Rosenbach Museum and Library?

#	Answer
1	Less than annually
2	Less than annually
3	Semi-annually
4	Semi-annually
5	Less than annually
6	Annually
7	Annually
8	Semi-annually
9	Less than annually
10	Semi-annually
11	Semi-annually
12	Less than annually
13	Weekly
14	Less than annually
15	Semi-annually
16	Monthly
17	Less than annually
18	Weekly
19	Monthly
20	Less than annually
21	Less than annually
22	Monthly
23	Monthly
24	Monthly
25	Semi-annually
26	Semi-annually
27	Monthly
28	Monthly
29	Monthly
30	Semi-annually
31	Less than annually
32	Less than annually
33	Monthly
34	Weekly
35	Semi-annually

2. Did you have prior knowledge of any of the subject matter featured in the Hands-On Tour?

#	Answer
1	Yes
2	No
3	No
4	Yes
5	No
6	Yes
7	Yes
8	Yes
9	No
10	Yes
11	No
12	No
13	Yes
14	No
15	No
16	Yes
17	No
18	Yes
19	Yes
20	Yes
21	No
22	Yes
23	Yes
24	Yes
25	No
26	No
27	Yes
28	No
29	Yes
30	Yes
31	Yes
32	Yes
33	No
34	Yes
35	No

3. If yes, describe the nature of your prior knowledge.

#	Answer
1	Basic familiarity with Shakespeare
2	N/A
3	N/A
4	I have bought and sold books and documents for 50+ years.
5	N/A
6	Don't quite understand this question. I've been to several Hands-On Tours and was drawn to the subject matter. In many cases I knew a bit about the topic(s).
7	The materials on display pertained to the American Civil War, my area of speciality as a PhD student.
8	Have taken the Joyce class at Rosenbach; have read extensively about Joyce in general and Ulysses in particular. Read a lot about Wilde, too. Other authors, not so much.
9	N/A
10	I had read some works by Irish authors as a student and teacher.
11	N/A
12	N/A
13	I want to tell you upfront that I am a docent at the Rosenbach. I was also an English teacher for 30 some years. I do have a literary background. So yes, I did have a knowledge of many of the topics given in the Hands On program.
14	N/A
15	N/A
16	Long-time collector of books and Judaica. Hands-on tours at the Katz Center, The Rosenbach, et al.
17	NA
18	general dinformation
19	I have taken many of the Hands-On Tour, so my prior knowledge would vary by topic. For example, I would be fairly knowledgeable re: Founding Fathers, very knowledgeable re: Civil War, quite familiar with Irish literature, but unfamiliar with Jewish theme.
20	Dracula
21	Yes. I followed the theme of the Firebird Reamigned for the city of Phila and its composer who was a friend of the featured female in the Hands On Tour...
22	College courses
23	general knowledge of subject discussed
24	I was familiar with Shakespeare's plays and had seen folios.
25	N/A
26	N/A
27	I am an English major so I frequently read high-level literature. I also have taken classes in Public History so I understand the power of touch.
28	N/A
29	General familiarity with the author(s)

30	I took a Shakespeare tour and knew a great deal of the material we would covering from my studies
31	I knew about Dracula the story although I had never read the book
32	General Knowledge
33	N/A
34	An a docent at the rosenbach and as an English teacher, I came to see the documents and to learn new facts.
35	N/A

4. During the Hands-On Tour, did you touch an object from the museum's collection?

#	Answer
1	Yes
2	Yes
3	Yes
4	Yes
5	Yes
6	Yes
7	Yes
8	Yes
9	Yes
10	Yes
11	Yes
12	Yes
13	Yes
14	Yes
15	No
16	Yes
17	Yes
18	Yes
19	Yes
20	Yes
21	Yes
22	Yes
23	Yes
24	Yes
25	No
26	No
27	Yes
28	Yes
29	Yes
30	Yes
31	Yes
32	No
33	Yes
34	Yes
35	Yes

5. Describe what you expected to gain from participating in a Hands-On Tour.

	Answer
1	more in depth knowledge about the subject
2	Insights into the collection of a nationally renowned library.
3	The feel of books and paper are important to me. Past tours at the Rosenbach have been rewarding.
4	Joy and added knowledge.
5	Fascinating facts and up-close viewing of rare and special items from the archives
6	Why do I have to gain anything from going to a museum? I don't generally go to a museum with any particular goal, other than to see interesting things and perhaps learn a bit about them.
7	I hoped to develop a better understanding of the Rosenbach's collections for my own research purposes. I was also eager to see primary source material up close, something unsurprising as a historian!
8	To see primary source material; learn more about authors I admire.
9	Fun and Interesting
10	I expected to see rare manuscripts, letters, and books and get to be close to items that were directly connected to the authors.
11	
12	Seeing documents and books that you normally don't have access to
13	Interesting details about the topic, either the historical, cultural or biographical influence on the object.
14	
15	
16	Close exposure to and knowledge about (antiquarian) (Jewish) books.
17	I thought it would be nice to see some of the manuscripts up close and learn a little bit about Lewis Carroll
18	depth of knowledge
19	I read an Inquirer article re: the HOTs at RML back in February 2008? 2009? I became a member the day of my first HOT that April: it was "Love Letters," the very first item was a passionate love letter by John Keats. I became a member that day and have been since. What I appreciate is the personal connection with curators and selected primary sources.
20	Information
21	I wanted to participate with others who were interested in that same individual that was introduced on the tour.. I expected to have a visual but also tactile connection with artifacts.
22	Deeper understanding of the book's publication or in the case of manuscripts the author's process
23	Opportunity to view interesting objects in a small group with subject matter expert
24	more in depth knowledge, and a chance to hold the object itself
25	A close-up view of old books, manuscripts, and/or artifacts
26	Fun facts and appreciation of the topic; was actually a private tour organized for our

	wedding weekend
27	I expected to learn the specific history and culture surrounding the person/people
28	Learn. See and perhaps handle a book, manuscript, or letter.
29	I wanted to gain deeper insight into the author(s), their creative process, and their cultural and intellectual connections at the time they lived.
30	I expected to learn interesting facts and share a group's excitement for the information
31	A closer look at historical artifacts
32	Enjoyment and knowledge
33	A closer look at what is being seen and discussed!
34	I expected to see and touch the original manuscripts and to learn intimate details about the subject.
35	small groups allow for a more intimate look at fragile or delicate items, so having the chance to do that was great

6. Describe what, if anything, you feel you have gained from participating in a Hands-On Tour.

#	Answer
1	It was great to get to know the Rosenbach's collection. The other participants were also great--there is something about the hands-on tours that I suspect draws a good crowd.
2	A greater appreciation for both the knowledge of librarians and the Rosenbach collection.
3	Participating in such tours with museum curators have been informative and delightful.
4	Joy and knowledge
5	greater knowledge of the authors works -fascinating facts regarding how a "classic" came to be-and excitement of seeing "the real thing" -
6	Again, I'm not loving the idea that you are expected to gain something from going to a museum. Having said that, I felt that the Hands-On Tours offered a more in-depth and often more intimate experience of an author's work or of the collection.
7	The opportunity to engage with the material was significant for two reasons. First, providing the public with access to actual historical objects/materials is a powerful means of capturing their attention. Second, it illustrates the challenges of historical research, in which the person has to develop an argument based on these diverse and variously-preserved items.
8	Brought immortals like Wilde and Joyce into reach - seeing original notes/letters/drafts made them more real to me as humans.
9	Nice experience
10	I felt like I was in the room with literary history. I felt like I got a special perspective that I couldn't get from a current edition of a book. I loved seeing letters, notes, and post cards most of all. It was the items not available elsewhere that made it exciting, and I loved being able to interact with them in a physical way.
11	
12	I learned more about the development of Lewis Carroll's writing
13	An insight into the Rosenbach brothers, as to how and why the object was obtained. Textbooks brush over the topics many times, the Rosenbach goes deeper.
14	Some knowledge about old books, a unique and interesting experience
15	To watch others experience especially school age students to learn from this hand on besides books in a library.
16	Knowledge about text with which I was minimally or not at all familiar.
17	I learned a lot about Lewis Carroll and the Alice in Wonderland series
18	much expanded appreciation for rare materials
19	My experiences with HOT definitely contributed to my training in 2012 to become a RML docent, which I still am!
20	Information, insights, and contacts with very nice people
21	I enjoyed the hands on participation with others and the individual attention we received that you usually do not experience when visiting other museums. It was personal and special.



22	Introduction to works relating to the subject that I was unaware of. A greater appreciation of the creative process and of the history of publishing.
23	More in depth understanding of subject matter
24	a better sense for the importance of the physical object, a sense of the history of the work
25	A more personal experience with the historical objects
26	Deeper appreciation and understanding of topic- our particular tour was organized around Founding Fathers and was listening to the Hamilton Soundtrack (the musical) in which the Jefferson info deepened my appreciation of the musical. Also, was a cool opportunity to have our family/friends get together to "geek out"
27	
28	Awe.Respect.Handle history and so take that away
29	I love having the opportunity to touch and smell and generally get all sensory with these literary relics. It's an unparalleled joy.
30	I got closer than I expected to literary history. On the pages of a second folio I was able to smell the smoke of the Great Fire of London! I was stunned and thrilled to be able to do this!
31	Our tour guide was an expert and told us about many intreresting fun facts we would not have known if it wasn't for the tour
32	enjoyment and knowledge
33	It has become an intimate experience with the subject matter
34	
35	

7. What is your age?

#	Answer
1	35-44
2	45-54
3	64-74
4	
5	55-64
6	64-74
7	18-24
8	55-64
9	45-54
10	45-54
11	
12	25-34
13	55-64
14	18-24
15	64-74
16	64-74
17	25-34
18	64-74
19	64-74
20	64-74
21	45-54
22	64-74
23	64-74
24	64-74
25	18-24
26	35-44
27	
28	75+
29	35-44
30	25-34
31	18-24
32	75+
33	64-74
34	
35	25-34

8. Which race, if any, do you identify as?

#	Answer
1	Asian/Pacific Islander
2	
3	White or Caucasian
4	
5	White or Caucasian
6	White or Caucasian
7	White or Caucasian
8	White or Caucasian
9	White or Caucasian
10	White or Caucasian
11	
12	White or Caucasian
13	White or Caucasian
14	Asian/Pacific Islander
15	White or Caucasian
16	White or Caucasian
17	
18	White or Caucasian
19	White or Caucasian
20	White or Caucasian
21	Black or African American
22	White or Caucasian
23	White or Caucasian
24	White or Caucasian
25	White or Caucasian
26	Asian/Pacific Islander
27	
28	White or Caucasian
29	White or Caucasian
30	White or Caucasian
31	White or Caucasian
32	White or Caucasian
33	White or Caucasian
34	
35	White or Caucasian

9. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

#	Answer
1	Bachelor's or Associate's degree
2	Post-graduate degree
3	Post-graduate degree
4	
5	Bachelor's or Associate's degree
6	Post-graduate degree
7	Bachelor's or Associate's degree
8	Post-graduate degree
9	Bachelor' or Associate's degree
10	Post-graduate degree
11	
12	Post-graduate degree
13	Post-graduate degree
14	Bachelor's or Associate's degree
15	Post-graduate degree
16	Post-graduate degree
17	Post-graduate degree
18	Post-graduate degree
19	Post-graduate degree
20	Post-graduate degree
21	Post-graduate degree
22	Post-graduate degree
23	High school or GED
24	Post-graduate degree
25	Some college
26	Post-graduate degree
27	
28	Bachelor's or Associate's degree
29	Post-graduate degree
30	Post-graduate degree
31	Bachelor's or Associate's degree
32	Bachelor's or Associate's degree
33	Post-graduate degree
34	
35	Bachelor's or Associate's degree

10. Which gender, if any, do you identify as?

#	Answer
1	Female
2	Male
3	Male
4	
5	Female
6	Female
7	Male
8	Male
9	Female
10	Female
11	
12	Female
13	Female
14	Female
15	Male
16	Male
17	Male
18	Male
19	Female
20	Male
21	Female
22	Female
23	Female
24	Female
25	Female
26	Female
27	
28	Female
29	Female
30	Female
31	Male
32	Male
33	Female
34	
35	Female

11. What is your zipcode?

#	Answer
1	10018
2	33611
3	19118
4	
5	18901
6	19038
7	19147
8	19072
9	4038
10	19103
11	
12	19711
13	8109
14	
15	19130
16	19103
17	19711
18	13788
19	19103
20	14226
21	19144
22	19103
23	19103
24	19103
25	60637
26	19130
27	
28	19103
29	19146
30	1501
31	6119
32	19102
33	19103 and 10541
34	
35	19102

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