Developing an Ethnographic Lexicon

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Thesaurus

Controlled Vocabulary

Authority Table

Nomenclature

Lexicon
Why I’m doing this
IMLS inventory/digitization
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-1026</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>pair Indian moccasins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1027</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Indian bag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1028</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Indian hood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1029</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Indian mittens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1030</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Indian beaded band</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1031</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Indian beaded band</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1032</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Indian beaded piece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1033</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Oriental hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1034</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Beaded piece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1035</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Small beaded bag</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**NAME:** Baby carrier; beaded

**DATE:** Probably Blackfoot

**LOCALITY:** Montana

**AGE:** Late 18th century

**MATERIALS:**
A buckskin baby carrier made in a U shape with the back of the U closed. The inside of the carrier is lined with cotton cloth. The exterior is elaborately decorated with beadwork with the design floral. A cloth-lined buckskin pendant hangs from the lower margin—this has geometric decorations and has metal tinklers at its ends.

**MEASUREMENTS:**

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Side</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
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<tr>
<td>Front</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottom</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

Solid Beading
Acc. Cat. No. A 1-1028

Yr Acc Cat

Location

Coll. Exh. Loan

Name: Baby carrier

Description: beaded, late 19th century

Country: Montana

Group: probably Blackfoot

Collector: Remarks: Ident. by Elden Johnson

The Science Museum
ANTHROPOLOGICAL COLLECTION
Collections database (1970s -1990s)

- Internal users

Collections database & online collections (now)

- Internal users
- Researchers
- Students
- Browsers
- Others

Visit Our Collections Online
Existing published lexicons

Nomenclature 4.0
for Museum Cataloging

History museums
Based on function
Printed book or spreadsheet

Art journal indexing
Many bases for categories
Online

Art & Architecture Thesaurus®
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Container</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby carrier</td>
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</table>

SMM in-house lexicon
Nomenclature 4.0

Art & Architecture Thesaurus
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catalog #</th>
<th>Component Parts</th>
<th>Accession#</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-1028</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>ETHNOLOGY</th>
<th>Class 2</th>
<th>DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSPORTATION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 3</td>
<td>LAND TRANSPORTATION</td>
<td>Object Name</td>
<td>CARRIER, CHILD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alt Name</td>
<td>COVER, CRADLEBOARD</td>
<td>Indigenous Name</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Artist/Maker:**

**Cultural Assoc.:**

- **World Region:** North America
- **People/Culture:** Blackfoot

**Description:**

Hide with cloth interior lining and multicolor beadwork. Open edges decorated with pink, blue, and yellow beadwork. Add metal cones. Some fringe wrapped in white or red quills. Partially made with beads and many metal cones. Some beadwork around edges of hide.

**Material:**

- HIDE
- CLOTH
- GLASS
- METAL
- QUILL

**Place Made:**

Blackfoot, Montana, North America

**Place Notes:**

**Location:**

SMM_Storage_AC.81_D108

**Object Status:**

STORAGE
Sample keyword search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NMAI</th>
<th>Penn</th>
<th>NMNH</th>
<th>Peabody Harvard</th>
<th>Hearst</th>
<th>AMNH</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>567 (many not relevant)</td>
<td>1167 (most not relevant)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child carrier</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>567 (many not relevant)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby carrier</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>246 (many not relevant)</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby carriers</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>219 (many not relevant)</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cradle</td>
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<td>463</td>
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Lexicon Survey

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SNQB5Y2

April 2015

74 respondents
What database management system do you use?

- PastPerfect: 34%
- Filemaker Pro: 14%
- K:Emu: 14%
- Re:discovery: 8%
- Argus: 5%
- Other: 25%

Other: Access, CollectiveAccess, CollectionSpace, EmbARK, iO, Mimsy, Minisis/Mint, Murkutu, MuseumPlus, TMS, and Developed In-house
Which standardized terminology system do you use?

- Nomenclature: 54%
- Getty Thesaurus: 15%
- Developed In-House: 37%
- Other: 24%
- None: 25%
Have you developed your own set of standardized terms for any of the following:

- Object Names: 70%
- Cultural Groups: 60%
Do you share your set of standardized terms with other museums?

87% said NO

Why the lack of sharing?