

# Fishing for Answers

Perceived Value and it's Implications for Museums



Imagine there's a fire:  
which one would **YOU** save?



Photo: Toronto Region Conservation Authority



# Value

**Gary Edson** (*Museum Ethics*, 1997)

Something desired or desirable based on a relative need or circumstance and can be individual, social, economic or aesthetic in nature.



# Considering Animal Welfare



[www.livingcolour.com](http://www.livingcolour.com)



Photo: Zouavman Le Zouave

# Display Practices and Challenges of Connecting with Fish



Georgia Aquarium



"GorillaRainforest". Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikipedia - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:GorillaRainforest.jpg#mediaviewer/File:GorillaRainforest.jpg>

# Marketing and Communication Related to Fish



Photo: <http://brandpuba.co/tag/ripleys-aquarium/>



Photo: Andrew Kolb, <http://kolbisneat.com/torontozoo.htm>

# Language – Making Emotional Connections

## **Fear-based language**

- Menacing (Seattle)
- Dangerous Lagoon (Ripley's Aquarium)
- Sharp teeth, aggressive (Monterey Bay)

## **Other Superficial Characteristics**

- Unusual, mysterious, beautiful, mesmerizing, wonder, oddity  
comical...

# What Does This All Mean?

- COMPLEX!
- Perception of value is a driving force for zoo, aquarium & museum activities
  - Conservation, exhibits, educational programs



Photo: Guille Avalos, Creative Commons

# More Work To Do

- Other definitions of value (animal-related, museum-related)
- Other factors affecting value
- Best practices (?)
- More research into visitor experience

# Thank You!



## Feedback? Questions?