

Enlivening legal education through The Postal Museum

Interpretation protocol

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The Project

This project explores how we might use The Postal Museum Collections to enliven legal education; and thereby enhance legal education, as well as public interest in law and in the Collections.

The project aim is to co-design a set of ‘Sparks’—expert, accessible, commentaries—which link items in the Collections to each of the core law subjects (contract, criminal, tort, public, land, trusts, EU, jurisprudence); and are directed to educators, students, and members of the public working from A-Level upwards.

The project draws on:

- Emily Allbon and Amanda Perry-Kessaris eds. (2023) *Design in Legal Education*. Routledge.

This Protocol

This Protocol is intended to help you as our project Collaborators to conduct an initial analysis of items that you have shortlisted as candidates for being developed into a Spark.

It is designed to encourage you to consider the item first as an artefact, and then as a legal source, through an iterative process of zooming in and out.

It draws on:

- Leonie Hannah and Sarah Longair (2017) ‘Analysing sources’ in *History Through Material Culture*. IHR Research Guides, Chapter 5.
- Amanda Perry-Kessaris (2021) ‘Entering design mode’ in *Doing sociolegal research in design mode*. Routledge, Chapter 5.
- Jules Prown (1982) ‘Mind in Matter- An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method.’ 17(1) *Winterthur Portfolio* 1-19
- John V. Willshire (2023) ‘Obliquiscopes: setting aperture for reality’. Blog post. Smithery. 22 September 2023. <https://smithery.com/2023/09/22/obliquiscopes-setting-aperture-for-reality/>

Brief 1 Analyse the item as an artefact

Title:

Finding number:

(a) Draw a simple sketch of the item highlighting whatever material or visual characteristics strike you as interesting:

(b) Zoom in

What is it made of?

What does it feel like?

What does it look like? Consider dimensions, proportions, decorative features, quality of craftsmanship

(c) Zoom out

Who made it?

Who has changed it?

Who has used it?

Who has been affected by it?

Why does it exist?

What did / does it mean?

What was it for?

How did it get here?

(d) Photograph the item (no flash)

Note: You may use this image for personal study. Check with The Postal Museum before publishing, including via social media.

Brief 2 Analyse the item as a legal source

(a) Zoom in:

What legal phenomena (e.g. actors, interactions, systems, ideas) are present in this item?

What legal topics are those phenomena connected to?

What aspects of those topics does the item relate to?

What does the item reveal about those topics?

What modules tend to cover those topics?

(b) Zoom out:

What kinds of pedagogical devices (e.g. lectures, seminars, assessments, worksheets, textbooks) might this item be used for?

What might the item add to those devices?

Brief 3 Reflection

Why is it hard to get people excited about the core module and/or topic to which this item relates?

How might this item help?

What excites you about the prospect of creating a 'Spark' around this item?

What worries you about it?