



The Emergence of the Modern Museum: An Anthology of Nineteenth-Century Sources

Jonah Siegel

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What should a museum contain or exclude? Who does a museum hope to attract? What, in fact, is the purpose of a museum? The change from private collection to public museum is a crucial cultural development of the nineteenth century, but one that is bound to raise fundamental questions. *The Emergence of the Modern Museum*, a unique compendium of original sources, presents a detailed and dynamic account of the development of the institution and its practices during that critical period of inception.

From poignant recollections of visits to stately homes to charged debates about the acquisition of the Elgin Marbles or the establishment of an Indian Museum; from early catalogue entries describing the curiosities discovered by Captain Cook to later ones organizing human skulls according to Darwinian principles--this volume offers a representative sample of the diverse, contentious, and often moving ideas that have shaped the public museum from its earliest history.

The Emergence of the Modern Museum makes available a wide range of material, including proposals for reform laid out in parliamentary papers, essays by influential theorists and curators, and accounts of the experience of museum-going in the popular press. With its original selections, thematic organization, and careful apparatus, this collection makes newly-accessible the cultural moment that defined the complex institution we know today.

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