

Inside The Lost Museum Curating Past And Present

National Museums in Africa brings the voices of African museum professionals into dialogue with scholars and, by so doing, is able to consider the state of African national museums from fresh perspectives. Covering all regions of the continent, the volume’s thirteen chapters allow for a deep and nuanced understanding of the intricate interplay between past and present in contemporary Africa. Taking stock of the shifting museum landscape in Africa, with new players like China and South Korea challenging the conditions of cultural exchange, the book demonstrates that national museums are being rediscovered as important sites of political engagement and cultural negotiation. This is the first book to critically examine the roles national museums in Africa have played in the societies in which they are situated, but it is also the first to consider the roles that national museums might play in current debates concerning the restitution and repatriation of cultural patrimony taken from Africa during the colonial era. Informed by a comparative and interdisciplinary perspective, this ground-breaking book will appeal to anyone interested in museums in Africa. It will be particularly useful to scholars and students working in the areas of museum and heritage studies, African studies, anthropology, archaeology, history, art history and cultural studies.

Mobile Museums presents an argument for the importance of circulation in the study of museum collections, past and present. It brings together an impressive array of international scholars and curators from a wide variety of disciplines – including the history of science, museum anthropology and postcolonial history - to consider the mobility of collections. The book combines historical perspectives on the circulation of museum objects in the past with contemporary accounts of their re-mobilisation, notably in the context of Indigenous community engagement. Contributors seek to explore processes of circulation historically in order to re-examine, inform and unsettle common assumptions about the way museum collections have evolved over time and through space. By foregrounding questions of circulation, the chapters in Mobile Museums collectively represent a fundamental shift in the understanding of the history and future uses of museum collections. The book addresses a variety of different types of collection, including the botanical, the ethnographic, the economic and the archaeological. Its perspective is truly global, with case studies drawn from South America, West Africa, Oceania, Australia, the United States, Europe and the UK. Mobile Museums helps us to understand why the mobility of museum collections was a fundamental aspect of their history and why it continues to matter today. Praise for Mobile Museums 'This book advances a paradigm shift in studies of museums and collections. A distinguished group of contributors reveal that collections are not dead assemblages. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries were marked by vigorous international traffic in ethnography and natural history specimens that tell us much about colonialism, travel and the history of knowledge – and have implications for the remobilisation of museums in the future.' – Nicholas Thomas, University of Cambridge 'The first major work to examine the implications and consequences of the migration of materials from one scientific or cultural milieu to another, it highlights the need for a more nuanced understanding of collections and offers insights into their potential for future re-mobilisation.' – Arthur MacGregor

Fully updated and extended to include the many changes that have occurred in the last decade and including glossary, sources of information and bibliography, this books draws on a wide range of practical experience to provide an invaluable guide to all aspects of museum work and staff experience for museums worldwide.

In Curating the American Past, Pete Daniel reveals how curators collect objects, plan exhibits, and bring alive the country’s complex and exciting history. In vivid detail, Daniel recounts the exhilaration of innovative research, the joys of collaboration, and the rewards of mentoring new generations of historians. In a career distinguished by prize-winning publications and pathbreaking exhibitions, Daniel also confronted the challenges of serving as a public historian tasked with protecting a definitive American museum from the erosion of scholarly standards. Curating the American Past offers a wealth of museum wisdom, illuminating the crucial role that dedicated historians and curators serve within our most important repositories of cultural memory.

Collecting and Conserving Net Art
Tracing the Public History of the Black Museum Movement

Do Museums Still Need Objects?

Curating the American Past

Mobile Museums

Possessing Nature

A History of Art and Crime in Six Thefts

Few institutions are warier of copies than museums. Few fields of knowledge are more prone to denounce copies as fake than the heritage field. Few discourses are as concerned with authenticity, aura, originals and provenance as those concerning exhibiting and collecting. So why is it that these are institutions, fields and discourses where copies proliferate and copying techniques have thrived for hundreds of years? Museums as Cultures of Copies aims to make the copying practices of museums visible and to discuss, from a range of interrelated perspectives, precisely what function copies fulfill in the heritage field and in museums today. With contributions from Europe and Canada, the book interrogates the meaning of copies and presents copying as a fully integrated part of museum work. Including chapters on ethnographic mannequins, digitalized photos, death masks, museum documentation and mechanical models, contributors consider how copying as a cultural form changes according to time and place and how new forms of copying and copy technologies challenge and expand museum work today. Arguing that copying is at the basis of museum practice and that new technologies and practices have been taken up and developed in museums since their inception, the book presents both heritage work and copies in a new light. Museums as Cultures of Copies should be of great interest to academics, scholars and postgraduate students working in the fields of museum and heritage studies, as well as visual studies, cultural history and archaeology. It should also be essential reading for museum practitioners.

Curating the Future: Museums, Communities and Climate Change explores the way museums tackle the broad global issue of climate change. It explores the power of real objects and collections to stir hearts and minds, to engage communities affected by change. Museums work through exhibitions, events, and specific collection projects to reach different communities in different ways. The book emphasises the moral responsibilities of museums to address climate change, not just by communicating science but also by enabling people already affected by changes to find their own ways of living with global warming. There are museums of natural history, of art and of social history. The focus of this book is the museum communities, like those in the Pacific, who have to find new ways to express their culture in a new place. The book considers how collections in museums might help future generations stay in touch with their culture, even where they have left their place. It asks what should the people of the present be collecting for museums in a climate-changed future? The book is rich with practical museum experience and detailed projects, as well as critical and philosophical analyses about where a museum can intervene to speak to this great conundrum of our times. Curating the Future is essential reading for all those working in museums and grappling with how to talk about climate change. It also has academic applications in courses of museology and museum studies, cultural studies, heritage studies, digital humanities, design, anthropology, and environmental humanities.

Inside the Lost MuseumCurating, Past and PresentHarvard University Press

This important and overdue book examines illuminated manuscripts and other book arts of the Global Middle Ages. Illuminated manuscripts and illustrated or decorated books—like today’s museums—preserve a rich array of information about how premodern peoples conceived of and perceived the world, its many cultures, and everyone’s place in it. Often a Eurocentric field of study, manuscripts are prisms through which we can glimpse the interconnected global history of humanity. Toward a Global Middle Ages is the first publication to examine decorated books produced across the globe during the period traditionally known as medieval. Through essays and case studies, the volume’s multidisciplinary contributors expand the historiography, chronology, and geography of manuscript studies to embrace a diversity of objects, individuals, narratives, and materials from Africa, Asia, Australasia, and the Americas—an approach that both engages with and contributes to the emerging field of scholarly inquiry known as the Global Middle Ages. Featuring 160 color illustrations, this wide-ranging and provocative collection is intended for all who are interested in engaging in a dialogue about how books and other textual objects contributed to world-making strategies from about 400 to 1600.

Anthropological Explorations in Multimodality, Deep Interdisciplinarity, and Autoethnography

Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy

Museums as Cultures of Copies

A Living Exhibition

Inside Public Art Museums

The Nightcrawler King

Sharing Historical Authority in a User-Generated World

Curating, Past and Present

When he retired as the chief security officer of New York City’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, John Barelli had spent the better part of forty years responsible not only for one of the richest treasure troves on the planet, but the museum’s staff, the millions of visitors, as well as American presidents, royalty, and heads of state from around the world. For the first time, John Barelli shares his experiences of the crimes that occurred on his watch; the investigations that captured thieves and recovered artwork; the lessons he learned and shared with law enforcement professionals in the United States and abroad; the accidents and near misses; and a few mysteries that were sadly never solved. He takes readers behind the scenes at the Met, introduces curators and administrators, walks the empty corridors after hours, and shares what it’s like to get the call that an ancient masterpiece has gone missing.

The Metropolitan Museum covers twelve acres in the heart of Manhattan and is filled with five thousand years of work by history’s great artists known and unknown: Goya, da Vinci, Rembrandt, Warhol, Pollack, Egyptian mummies, Babylonian treasures, Colonial crafts, and Greek vases. John and a small staff of security professionals housed within the Museum were responsible for all of it. Over the years, John helped make the museum the state-of-the-art facility it is today and created a legacy in art security for decades to come. Focusing on six thefts but filled with countless stories that span the late 1970s on into the 21st century, John opens the files on thefts, shows how museum personnel along with local and sometimes Federal Agents opened investigations and more often than not caught the thief. But of ultimate importance was the recovery of the artwork, including Celtic and Egyptian gold, French tapestries, Greek sculpture, and more. At the heart of this book there will always be art—those who love it and those who take it, two groups of people that are far from mutually exclusive.

In Search of Lost Futures asks how imaginations might be activated through practices of autoethnography, multimodality, and deep interdisciplinarity—each of which has the power to break down methodological silos, cultivate novel research sensibilities, and inspire researchers to question what is known about ethnographic process, representation, reflexivity, audience, and intervention within and beyond the academy. By blurring the boundaries between the past, present, and future; between absence and presence; between the possible and the impossible; and between fantasy and reality, In Search of Lost Futures pushes the boundaries of ethnographic engagement. It reveals how researchers on the cutting edge of the discipline are studying absence and grief and employing street performance, museum exhibit, anticipation, or simulated reality to research and intervene in the possible, the impossible, and the uncertain.

Collecting and Conserving Net Art explores the qualities and characteristics of net art and its influence on conservation practices. By addressing and answering some of the challenges facing net art and providing an exploration of its intersection with conservation, the book casts a new light on net art, conservation, curating and museum studies. Viewing net art as a process rather than as a fixed object, the book considers how this is influenced by and executed through other systems and users. Arguing that these processes and networks are imbued with ambiguity, the book suggests that this is strategically used to create suspense, obfuscate existing systems and disrupt power structures. The rapid obsolescence of hard and software, the existence of many net artworks within restricted platforms and the fact that artworks often act as assemblages that change or mutate, make net art a challenging case for conservation. Taking the performative and interpretive roles conservators play into account, the book demonstrates how practitioners can make more informed decisions when responding to, critically analysing or working with net art, particularly software-based processes. Collecting and Conserving Net Art is intended for researchers, academics and postgraduate students, especially those engaged in the study of museum studies, conservation and heritage studies, curatorial studies, digital art and art history. The book should also be interesting to professionals who are involved in the conservation and curation of digital arts, performance, media and software.

In a world obsessed with the virtual, tangible things are once again making history. Tangible Things invites readers to look closely at the things around them, ordinary things like the food on their plate and extraordinary things like the transit of planets across the sky. It argues that almost any material thing, when examined closely, can be a link between present and past. The authors of this book pulled an astonishing array of materials out of storage--from a pencil manufactured by Henry David Thoreau to a bracelet made from iridescent beetles--in a wide range of Harvard University collections to mount an innovative exhibition alongside a new general education course. The exhibition challenged the rigid distinctions between history, anthropology, science, and the arts. It showed that object-centered inquiry inevitably leads to a questioning of categories within and beyond history. Tangible Things is both an introduction to the range and scope of Harvard’s remarkable collections and an invitation to reassess collections of all sorts, including those that reside in the bottom drawers or attics of people’s houses. It interrogates the nineteenth-century categories that still divide art museums from science museums and historical collections from anthropological displays and that assume history is made only from written documents. Although it builds on a larger discussion among specialists, it makes its arguments through case studies, hoping to simultaneously entertain and inspire. The twenty case studies take us from the Galapagos Islands to India and from a third-century Egyptian papyrus fragment to a board game based on the twentieth-century comic strip "Dagwood and Blondie." A companion website catalogs the more than two hundred objects in the original exhibition and suggests ways in which the principles outlined in the book might change the way people understand the tangible things that surround them.

Stuffed Animals and Pickled Heads

Letting Go?

Identity, History and Politics

Representations of Slavery

Bone Rooms

Stealing the Show

Inside the Lost Museum

Lost in the Museum

Today well over two hundred museums focusing on African American history and culture can be found throughout the United States and Canada. Many of these institutions trace their roots to the 1960s and 1970s, when the struggle for racial equality inspired a movement within the black community to make the history and culture of African America more "public." This book tells the story of four of these groundbreaking museums: the DuSable Museum of African American History in Chicago (founded in 1961); the International Afro-American Museum in Detroit (1965); the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum in Washington, D.C. (1967); and the African American Museum of Philadelphia (1976). Andrea A. Burns shows how the founders of these institutions, many of whom had ties to the Black Power movement, sought to provide African Americans with a meaningful alternative to the misrepresentation or utter neglect of black history found in standard textbooks and most public history sites. Through the recovery and interpretation of artifacts, documents, and stories drawn from African American experience, they encouraged the embrace of a distinctly black identity and promoted new methods of interaction between the museum and the local community. Over time, the black museum movement induced mainstream institutions to integrate African American history and culture into their own exhibits and educational programs. This often controversial process has culminated in the creation of a National Museum of African American History and Culture, now scheduled to open in the nation's capital in 2015.

This book, based upon the voluminous body of his paintings, drawings, and papers held by the Speed Art Museum in Louisville, Kentucky, and upon research in American and European museums and archives, offers for the first time a comprehensive account of Weygold's life and achievements as an artist, collector, educator, and social activist.

Over the centuries, natural history museums have evolved from being little more than musty repositories of stuffed animals and pinned bugs, to being crucial generators of new scientific knowledge. They have also become vibrant educational centers, full of engaging exhibits that share those discoveries with students and an enthusiastic general public. At the heart of it all from the very start have been curators. Yet after three decades as a natural history curator, Lance Grande found that he still had to explain to people what he does. This book is the answer—and, oh, what an answer it is: lively, exciting, up-to-date, it offers a portrait of curators and their research like none we’ve seen, one that conveys the intellectual excitement and the educational and social value of curation. Grande uses the personal story of his own career—most of it spent at Chicago’s storied Field Museum—to structure his account as he explores the value of research and collections, the importance of public engagement, changing ecological and ethical considerations, and the impact of rapidly improving technology. Throughout, we are guided by Grande’s keen sense of mission, of a job where the why is always as important as the what. This beautifully written and richly illustrated book is a clear-eyed but loving account of natural history museums, their curators, and their ever-expanding roles in the twenty-first century.

A moving and fun account of the man who influenced fifty years of growth at the New Orleans Museum of Art

The Crafting of Artefacts and Authenticity

The Culture and Evolution of Natural History Museums

Dinosaurs, Dynasties, & the Story of Life on Earth

Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums

The Participatory Museum

Politics, Memory and Human Rights

Collecting and Provenance

Museum and Gallery Studies

A gripping tale of 150 years of scientific adventure, research, and discovery at the Yale Peabody Museum This fascinating book tells the story of how one museum changed ideas about dinosaurs, dynasties, and even the story of life on earth. The Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, now celebrating its 150th anniversary, has remade the way we see the world. Delving into the museum’s storied and colorful past, award-winning author Richard Conniff introduces a cast of bold explorers, roughneck bone hunters, and visionary scientists. Some became famous for wresting Brontosaurus, Triceratops, and other dinosaurs from the earth, others pioneered the introduction of science education in North America, and still others rediscovered the long-buried glory of Machu Picchu. In this lively tale of events, achievements, and scandals from throughout the museum’s history, Readers will encounter renowned paleontologist O. C. Marsh who engaged in ferocious combat with his "Bone Wars" rival Edward Drinker Cope, as well as dozens of other intriguing characters. Nearly 100 color images portray important figures in the Peabody’s history and special objects from the museum’s 13-million-item collections. For anyone with an interest in exploring, understanding, and protecting the natural world, this book will deliver abundant delights.

How is slavery presented at the public and private plantation museums in the American South, almost 150 years after the Civil War? Jennifer L. Eichstedt and Stephen Small investigated this question in Virginia, Georgia, and Louisiana by touring more than one hundred plantation museums; twenty locations organized and run by African Americans; and eighty general history sites. Their findings indicate that the experience and legacy of

slavery is still inadequately presented within the larger discourse surrounding race, racism, and national identity. The vast majority of slavery sites construct narratives of history that valorize a white elite of the pre-emancipation South and trivialize the experience of slavery for both enslaved people and their enslavers. Through systematic analysis of richly textured data, the authors of Representations of Slavery have developed a typology of primary representational/discursive strategies used to discuss slavery and the enslaved. They clearly demonstrate how these strategies are linked to representations and practices in the larger social and political arenas. Eichstedt and Small found counter narratives at sites organized and staffed by African Americans, and a small number of white-organized sites have made efforts to incorporate African American experiences of slavery as part of their presentations. But the predominant framework of the “white-centric exhibition narrative” persists, and the authors draw from contemporary literature on racialization, museums, cultural studies, and collective memory to make a case for public debate and intervention.

In 1500 few Europeans regarded nature as a subject worthy of inquiry. Yet fifty years later the first museums of natural history had appeared in Italy, dedicated to the marvels of nature. Italian patricians, their curiosity fueled by new voyages of exploration and the humanist rediscovery of nature, created vast collections as a means of knowing the world and used this knowledge to their greater glory. Drawing on extensive archives of visitors' books, letters, travel journals, memoirs, and pleas for patronage, Paula Findlen reconstructs the lost social world of Renaissance and Baroque museums. She follows the new study of natural history as it moved out of the universities and into sixteenth- and seventeenth-century scientific societies, religious orders, and princely courts. Findlen argues convincingly that natural history as a discipline blurred the border between the ancients and the moderns, between collecting in order to recover ancient wisdom and the development of new textual and experimental scholarship. Her vivid account reveals how the scientific revolution grew from the constant mediation between the old forms of knowledge and the new.

The natural history museum is a place where the line between "high" and "low" culture effectively vanishes—where our awe of nature, our taste for the bizarre, and our thirst for knowledge all blend happily together. But as Stephen Asma shows in Stuffed Animals and Pickled Heads, there is more going on in these great institutions than just smart fun. Asma takes us on a wide-ranging tour of natural history museums in New York and Chicago, London and Paris, interviewing curators, scientists, and exhibit designers, and providing a wealth of fascinating observations. We learn how the first museums were little more than high-toned side shows, with such garish exhibits as the pickled head of Peter the Great's lover. In contrast, today's museums are hot-beds of serious science, funding major research in such fields as anthropology and archaeology. "Rich in detail, lucid explanation, telling anecdotes, and fascinating characters.... Asma has rendered a fascinating and credible account of how natural history museums are conceived and presented. It's the kind of book that will not only engage a wide and diverse readership, but it should, best of all, send them flocking to see how we look at nature and ourselves in those fabulous legacies of the curiosity cabinet."--The Boston Herald.

Museum Curators Guide

Museums and Sites of Persuasion

Encountering the World through Illuminated Manuscripts

The Smithsonian and the Transformation of the Universal Museum

Making and Unmaking Mexico's National Collections

Moving beyond Conventional Methods

A Memoir of a Quarter Century at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History

Toward a Global Middle Ages

The study of provenance—the history of the creation and ownership of an artefact, work of art, or specimen—provides insights into the history of taste and collecting, illuminating the social, economic, and historic trends in which an object was created and collected. It is as much a history of people as it is of objects, and its study often reveals intricate networks of relationships, patterns of activity and motivations. This book promotes the study of the history of collecting and collections in all their variety through the lens of provenance, and explores the subject as a cross-disciplinary activity. Perhaps for the first time in a publication, it draws on expertise ranging from art history and anthropology, to natural history and law, looking at periods from antiquity through the 18th century and the Holocaust era to the present, and materials from Europe and the Americas to China and the Pacific. The issues raised are wide-ranging, touching on aspects of authenticity, cultural meaning and material transformation and economic and commercial drivers, as well as collector and object biography. The book fills a gap in the study of collecting and provenance, taking the subject holistically and from multiple standpoints, better to reflect the widening interest in provenance from a range of disciplinary perspectives. This book will be a service to the field, from established scholars and museum professionals to students of collecting history, cultural heritage, and museum studies.

"We live in a museum age," writes Steven Conn in Do Museums Still Need Objects? And indeed, at the turn of the twenty-first century, more people are visiting museums than ever before. There are now over 17,500 accredited museums in the United States, averaging approximately 865 million visits a year, more than two million visits a day. New museums have proliferated across the cultural landscape even as older ones have undergone transformational additions: from the Museum of Modern Art and the Morgan in New York to the High in Atlanta and the Getty in Los Angeles. If the golden age of museum-building came a century ago, when the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the American Museum of Natural History, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Field Museum of Natural History, and others were created, then it is fair to say that in the last generation we have witnessed a second golden age. By closely observing the cultural, intellectual, and political roles that museums play in contemporary society, while also delving deeply into their institutional histories, historian Steven Conn demonstrates that museums are no longer seen simply as houses for collections of objects. Conn ranges across a wide variety of museum types—from art and anthropology to science and commercial museums—asking questions about the relationship between museums and knowledge, about the connection between culture and politics, about the role of museums in representing non-Western societies, and about public institutions and the changing nature of their constituencies. Elegantly written and deeply researched, Do Museums Still Need Objects? is essential reading for historians, museum professionals, and those who love to visit museums.

This is a book about objects. Stones, ruins, bones, mummies, mannequins, statues, photographs, fakes, instruments, and natural history specimens all formed part of Mexico’s National Museum complex at different moments across two centuries of collecting and display. Museum Matters traces the emergence, consolidation, and dispersal of this national museum complex by telling the stories of its objects. Objects that have been separated over time are brought back together in this book in order to shed light on the interactions and processes that have forged things into symbols of science, aesthetics, and politics. The contributors to this volume illuminate how collections came into being or ceased to exist over time, or how objects moved in and out of collections and museum spaces. They explore what it means to move things physically and spatially, as well as conceptually and symbolically. Museum Matters unravels the concept of the national museum. By unmaking the spaces, frameworks, and structures that form the complicated landscape of national museums, this volume brings a new way to understand the storage, displays, and claims about the Mexican nation’s collections today. Contributors Miruna Achim, Christina Bueno, Laura Cházaro, Susan Deans-Smith, Frida Gorbach, Haydeé López Hernández, Carlos Mondragón, Bertina Olmedo Vera, Sandra Rozental, Mario Rufer

Illustrated with over fifty photos, Civilizing Rituals merges contemporary debates with lively discussion and explores central issues involved in the making and displaying of art as industry and how it is presented to the community. Carol Duncan looks at how nations, institutions and private individuals present art , and how art museums are shaped by cultural, social and political determinants. Civilizing Rituals is ideal reading for students of art history and museum studies, and professionals in the field will also find much of interest here.

From Scientific Racism to Human Prehistory in Museums

Making History through Objects

The Museum

Museums, Science, and Literature in Nineteenth-Century America

Behind the Scenes of Natural History Museums

Civilizing Rituals

Museum Basics

Frederick Weygold

Museums and Sites of Persuasion examines the concept of museums and memory sites as locations that attempt to promote human rights, democracy and peace. Demonstrating that such sites have the potential to act as powerful spaces of persuasion or contestation, the book also shows that there are perils in the selective memory and history that they present. Examining a range of museums, memorials and exhibits in places as varied as Burundi, Denmark, Georgia, Kosovo, Mexico, Peru, Vietnam and the US, this volume demonstrates how they represent and try to come to terms with difficult histories. As sites of persuasion, the contributors to this book argue, their public goal is to use memory and education about the past to provide moral lessons to visitors that will encourage a more democratic and peaceful future. However, the case studies also demonstrate how political, economic and social realities often undermine this lofty goal, raising questions about how these sites of persuasion actually function on a daily basis. Straddling several interdisciplinary fields of research and study, Museums and Sites of Persuasion will be essential reading for those working in the fields of museum studies, memory studies, and genocide studies. It will also be essential reading for museum practitioners and anyone engaged in the study of history, sociology, political science, anthropology and art history.

Since its founding in 1846 “for the increase and diffusion of knowledge,” the Smithsonian Institution has been an important feature of the American cultural landscape. In A Living Exhibition, William S. Walker examines the tangled history of cultural exhibition at the Smithsonian from its early years to the chartering of the National Museum of the American Indian in 1989. He tracks the transformation of the institution from its original ideal as a “universal museum” intended to present the totality of human experience to the variegated museum and research complex of today. Walker pays particular attention to the half century following World War II, when the Smithsonian significantly expanded. Focusing on its exhibitions of cultural history, cultural anthropology, and folk life, he places the Smithsonian within the larger context of Cold War America and the social movements of the 1960s, ’70s, and ’80s. Organized chronologically, the book uses the lens of the Smithsonian’s changing exhibitions to show how institutional decisions become intertwined with broader public debates about pluralism, multiculturalism, and decolonization. Yet if a trend toward more culturally specific museums and exhibitions characterized the postwar history of the institution, its leaders and curators did not abandon the vision of the universal museum. Instead, Walker shows, even as the Smithsonian evolved into an extensive complex of museums, galleries, and research centers, it continued to negotiate the imperatives of cultural convergence as well as divergence, embodying both a desire to put everything together and a need to take it all apart.

The Museum Curator’s Guide is a practical reference book for emerging arts and heritage professionals working with a wide range of objects (including fine art, decorative arts, social history, ethnographic and archaeological collections), and explores the core work of the curator within a gallery or museum setting. Commencing with a clear overview of and introduction to current material culture and museum studies theories, Nicola Pickering then discusses their practical application with collections. Illustrated with specific case studies, she considers the role of the curator, their duties, day to day work, interaction with and care or preservation of objects and the myriad ways objects can be catalogued, displayed, moved, arranged, stored, interpreted and explained in a present-day museum. The Museum Curator’s Guide represents an essential and lasting resource for all those working with the collection, preservation and presentation of objects, including students of collections management and curatorship; current gallery and museum professionals; and private collectors.

Letting Go? investigates path-breaking public history practices at a time when the traditional expertise of museums seems challenged at every turn—by the Web and digital media, by community-based programming, by new trends in oral history and by contemporary art. In this anthology of 19 thought pieces, case studies, conversations and commissioned art, almost 30 leading practitioners such as Michael Frisch, Jack Tchen, Liz Ševcenko, Kathleen McLean, Nina Simon, Otabenga Jones and Associates, and Fred Wilson explore the implications of letting audiences create, not just receive, historical content. Drawing on examples from history, art, and science museums, Letting Go? offers concrete examples and models that will spark innovative work at institutions of all sizes and budgets. This engaging new collection will serve as an introductory text for those newly grappling with a changing field and, for those already pursuing the goal of “letting go,” a tool for taking stock and pushing ahead.

Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926

Museum Matters

Understanding

Memoirs of an Art Museum Curator

Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums

From Storefront to Monument

In Search of Lost Futures

Artist and Ethnographer of North American Indians

Museum and Gallery Studies: The Basics is an accessible guide for the student approaching Museum and Gallery Studies for the first time. Taking a global view, it covers the key ideas, approaches and contentious issues in the field. Balancing theory and practice, the book address important questions such as: What are museums and galleries? Who decides which kinds of objects are worthy of collection? How are museums and galleries funded? What ethical concerns do practitioners need to consider? How is the field of Museum and Gallery Studies developing? This user-friendly text is an essential read for anyone wishing to work within museums and galleries, or seeking to understand academic debates in the field.

Teyler’s Foundation in Haarlem and its ‘Book and Art Room’ of 1779, edited by Ellinoor Bergvelt and Debora Meijers, examines for the first time this remarkable institution in the context of scientific, museological, political, artistic, religious and philosophical developments.

Visitor participation is a hot topic in the contemporary world of museums, art galleries, science centers, libraries and cultural organizations. How can your institution do it and do it well? The Participatory Museum is a practical guide to working with community members and visitors to make cultural institutions more dynamic, relevant, essential places. Museum consultant and exhibit designer Nina Simon weaves together innovative design techniques and case studies to make a powerful case for participatory practice. “Nina Simon’s new book is essential for museum directors interested in experimenting with audience participation on the one hand and cautious about upending the tradition museum model on the other. In concentrating on the practical, this book makes implementation possible in most museums. More importantly, in describing the philosophy and rationale behind participatory activity, it makes clear that action does not always require new technology or machinery. Museums need to change, are changing, and will change further in the future. This book is a helpful and thoughtful road map for speeding such transformation.” -Elaine Heumann Gurian, international museum consultant and author of Civilizing the Museum “This book is an extraordinary resource. Nina has assembled the collective wisdom of the field, and has given it her own brilliant spin. She shows us all how to walk the talk. Her book will make you want to go right out and start experimenting with participatory projects.” -Kathleen McLean, participatory museum designer and author of Planning for People in Museum Exhibitions "I predict that in the future this book will be a classic work of museology." --Elizabeth Merritt, founding director of the Center for the Future of Museums

A Companion to Museum Studies captures the multidisciplinary approach to the study of the development, roles, and significance of museums in contemporary society. Collects first-rate original essays by leading figures from a range of disciplines and theoretical stances, including anthropology, art history, history, literature, sociology, cultural studies, and museum studies Examines the complexity of the museum from cultural, political, curatorial, historical and representational perspectives Covers traditional subjects, such as space, display, buildings, objects and collecting, and more contemporary challenges such as visiting, commerce, community and experimental exhibition forms

National Museums in Africa

Critical Conversations

A Multidisciplinary Approach

A Key Moment in the History of a Learned Institution

Decolonizing Museums

Buried Treasures and the Stories They Tell

Collections in circulation

A Short History of Crisis and Resilience

Useful Objects examines the history of American museums during the nineteenth century through the eyes of visitors, writers, and collectors. Museums of this period included a wide range of objects, from botanical and zoological specimens to antiquarian artifacts and technological models. Intended to promote "useful knowledge," these collections generated broader discussions about how objects were selected, preserved, and classified. In guidebooks and periodicals, visitors described their experiences within museum galleries and marveled at the objects they encountered. In fiction, essays, and poems, writers embraced the imaginative possibilities represented by collections and proposed alternative systems of arrangement. These conversations interrogated many aspects of American culture, raising deep questions about how objects are interpreted--and who gets to decide their value. Combining literary criticism, the history of science, and museum studies, Useful Objects examines the dynamic and often fraught debates that emerged during a crucial period in the history of museums by drawing on a wide range of archival materials and accounts in fiction, guidebooks, and periodicals. As museums gradually transformed from encyclopedic cabinets to more specialized public institutions, many writers, including J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, William Wells Brown, Walt Whitman, and Henry David Thoreau, questioned who would have access to collections and the authority to interpret them. Throughout this period, they considered loss and preservation, raised concerns about the place of new ideas, and resisted increasingly fixed categories. Their reflections shaped broader debates about the scope and purpose of museums in American culture that continue to resonate today.

Few beyond the insider realize that museums own millions of objects the public never sees. In Lost in the Museum, Nancy Moses takes the reader behind the Oemployees onlyO doors to uncover the stories buried-along with the objects-in the crypts of museums, historical societies, and archives. Moses discovers the actual birds shot, stuffed, and painted by John James Audubon, AmericaOs most beloved bird artist; a spear that abolitionist John Brown carried in his quixotic quest to free the slaves; and the skull of a prehistoric Peruvian child who died with scurvy. She takes the reader to Ker-Feal, the secret farmhouse that Albert Barnes of the Barnes Foundation filled with fabulous American antiques and that was then left untouched for more than fifty years. Weaving the stories of the object, its original owner, and the often idiosyncratic institution where the object resides, the book reveals the darkest secret of the cultural world: the precarious balance of art, culture, and politics that keep items, for decades, lost in the museum.

Conn's study includes familiar places like the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Academy of Natural Sciences, but he also draws attention to forgotten ones, like the Philadelphia Commercial Museum, once the repository for objects from many turn-of-the-century world's fairs. What emerges from Conn's analysis is that museums of all kinds shared a belief that knowledge resided in the objects themselves. Using what Conn has termed "object-based epistemology," museums of the late nineteenth century were on the cutting edge of American intellectual life. By the first quarter of the twentieth century, however, museums had largely been replaced by research-oriented universities as places where new knowledge was produced. According to Conn, not only did this mean a change in the way knowledge was conceived, but also, and perhaps more importantly, who would have access to it.

A Smithsonian Book of the Year A Nature Book of the Year “Provides much-needed foundation of the relationship between museums and Native Americans.” —Smithsonian “How did our museums become great storehouses of human remains? What have we learned from the skulls and bones of unburied dead? Bone Rooms chases answers to these questions through shifting ideas about race, anatomy, anthropology, and archaeology and helps explain recent ethical standards for the collection and display of human dead.” —Ann Fabian, author of The Skull Collectors “Details the nascent views of racial science that evolved in U.S. natural history, anthropological, and medical museums...Redman effectively portrays the remarkable personalities behind [these debates]...pitting the prickly Aleš Hrdlička at the Smithsonian...against ally-turned-rival Franz Boas at the American Museum of Natural History.” —David Hurst Thomas, Nature “In exquisite detail...Bone Rooms narrates the rise and fall of racial science in America...This complicated and engrossing story is filled with unexpected twists and significant implications for the history of anthropology...and intellectual history of race in the United States, and American intellectual history more generally.” —Matthew Dennis, author of Seneca Possessed “A beautifully written, meticulously documented analysis of [this] little-known history.” —Brian Fagan, Current World Archeology In 1864 a U.S. army doctor dug up the remains of a Dakota man who had been killed in Minnesota and sent the skeleton to a museum in Washington that was collecting human remains for research. In the “bone rooms” of the Smithsonian, a scientific revolution was unfolding that would change our understanding of the human body, race, and prehistory. Seeking evidence to support new theories of racial classification, collectors embarked on a global competition to recover the best specimens of skeletons, mummies, and fossils. As the study of these discoveries increasingly discredited racial theory, new ideas emerging in the budding field of anthropology displaced race as the main motive for building bone rooms. Today, debates about the ethics of these collections have taken on a new urgency as a new generation seeks to learn about the indigenous past and to return objects of spiritual significance to native peoples.

Tangible Things

Teyler’s Foundation in Haarlem and Its ‘Book and Art Room’ of 1779

A Companion to Museum Studies

The National Museum of the American Indian

House of Lost Worlds

The Basics

Museums, Communities and Climate Change

Useful Objects

"On a cold and clear afternoon in January 1865, a roaring fire swept through the Smithsonian Institution. The flames at the Smithsonian, however, were merely an omen of things to come for museums in the United States. Beset by challenges ranging from pandemic and war to fire and economic uncertainty, museums have sought ways to emerge from crisis periods stronger than before, occasionally carving important new paths forward in the process. Hampered by troubling problems, museum leaders made different choices while remaining committed to versions of the museum idea. This book explores the concepts of "crisis" as it relates to museums in the United States, exploring how museums have dealt with challenges ranging from depression and war to pandemic and philosophical uncertainty. Fires, floods, and hurricanes have all upended museum plans and forced people to ask difficult questions about U.S. cultural life. With chapters exploring the First World War and 1918 influenza pandemic, Great Depression, Second World War, 1970 Art Strike in New York City, as well as more recent controversies in U.S. museums, this book takes a new approach to understanding museum history. By diving deeply into the nature of museum changes emerging from these key challenges, historian Samuel J. Redman argues that museums and other cultural institutions can use their history to prepare for challenges lying ahead"--

Museum lovers know that energy and mystery run through every exhibition. Steven Lubar explains work behind the scenes—collecting, preserving, displaying, and using art and artifacts in teaching, research, and community-building—through historical and contemporary examples, especially the lost but reimagined Jenks Museum at Brown University.

The first American national museum designed and run by indigenous peoples, the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington DC opened in 2004. It represents both the United States as a singular nation and the myriad indigenous nations within its borders. Constructed with materials closely connected to Native communities across the continent, the museum contains more than 800,000 objects and three permanent galleries and routinely holds workshops and seminar series. This first comprehensive look at the National Museum of the American Indian encompasses a variety of perspectives, including those of Natives and non-Natives, museum employees, and outside scholars across disciplines such as cultural studies and criticism, art history, history, museum studies, anthropology, ethnic studies, and Native American studies. The contributors engage in critical dialogues about key aspects of the museum's origin, exhibits, significance, and the relationship between Native Americans and other related museums.

Museum exhibitions focusing on Native American history have long been curator controlled. However, a shift is occurring, giving Indigenous people a larger role in determining exhibition content. In *Decolonizing Museums*, Amy Lonetree examines the co

Curators

Curating the Future