

Photography Within the Humanities is a welcome attempt at altering this perspective. The book arose from a series of ten symposia held at Wellesley College in April 1975, centring around "ten individuals who regard photography as a significant part of their work or for whom photography is important enough to engage their critical attention." These people were John Morris, Paul Taylor, Gjon Mili, Robert Frank, Frederick Wiseman, John Szarkowski, W. Eugene Smith, Susan Sontag, Irving Penn and Robert Coles. The book contains an edited version of taped remarks of each. On the whole the editing seems well done and the photographs, which are well reproduced, relate clearly to the text. There is a useful bibliography relating to each lecture.

The editors state that their aim was "to expand our understanding of photography beyond the realm of the art museum by asking questions . . . which would promote a recognition of its connection to other related fields, and . . . would articulate that connection." They found, however, that few of the speakers dealt directly with the theme but chose instead to discuss their own relationships to photography. Thus, instead of posing and answering penetrating questions about the medium, "it was discovered that we are still only at the early stages of our inquiry, the assembly of the primary data."

As might be expected, the quality of the ten chapters varies, determined as much by the interests of the reader as by the abilities of the lecturers, whose comments, although not always dealing with the theme, were often stimulating and frequently complemented one another. Among the offerings of greatest interest to archivists are the comments of John Morris, former Picture Editor for *The New York Times*, who compared the use of newspaper photos with television news, discussed the ethics of using shocking photographs (those from Viet Nam, for example) and related the differences in presidential photo coverage since Franklin Roosevelt. News photography was also discussed by John Szarkowski, from the Museum of Modern Art, and by Susan Sontag, a critic and film-maker. Their contrasting points of view enrich the volume.

Psychiatrist Robert Coles energetically condemned the lack of intelligent comment on photography. He stressed that photography and words are interdependent and that photographs usually need explanation if they are not to be misunderstood — a point also well made by Szarkowski. According to Coles, it is not a question of which is more accurate or truthful but rather that each is an important means of communication.

Paul Taylor, an economist, also examined the relationship of words and pictures. The photographs by his wife, Dorothea Lange, which illustrated *An American Exodus*, led directly to the formation of sanitary workers' camps in California in the 1930s, an example of how photography has effected social change.

There is much in this volume which is useful and thought-provoking, but it is not the exhaustive or penetrating look at photography and the humanities that the editors had hoped. Rather, as they conclude, it is a source book and a collection of self-portraits.

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Collecting Photographica: The Images and Equipment of the First Hundred Years of Photography. GEORGE GILBERT. New York: Hawthorn Books, c1976. xiii, 302 p. illus. ISBN 0 8015 1408 8 \$19.95.

During the past decade, general interest in the history of photography, an interest shared by art galleries, museums, historical societies, archives and private collectors alike, has increased remarkably. Some of these institutions actively pursue the acquisition of photographs, while others suddenly acquire them unsolicited. In addition, com-

mercial galleries and art dealers now buy and sell photographic images, and specialized auctions regularly offer historical photographic equipment and old photographs. In response to this new interest, a number of books have recently appeared introducing historical "photographica," a term which includes every imaginable item that can be associated with photography and its methods.

Collecting Photographica, aimed at the private collector rather than the curator of an archives or museum, contains one chapter which deals with photographic images and eleven which describe various types of photographic hardware, including motion picture machinery, darkroom equipment and accessories. Also, one chapter provides a guide to collecting photographica, and the final chapter introduces the reader to some of the better known and successful private collectors in North America and Europe.

The author, a well-known collector himself, has succeeded in describing engagingly and accurately the more important kinds of images and the most common and valuable equipment of the first hundred years of photography. Archivists should learn about photographic hardware, particularly cameras, since it may provide clues about the date and origin of a photographic image. A simple case in point: a circular undated photographic image two and one-half inches in diameter can have been taken only by a Kodak No. 1 camera, and since this camera was introduced in 1888, the photograph could not have been taken before that date.

A number of the book's shortcomings should be pointed out. The chapter titled "Collecting Images," while containing reproductions of instructive examples of photographs and daguerreian portrait cases, has only about three full pages of text. The table summarizing the various types of photographs, originally distributed by the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, could certainly have been improved and enlarged. Dozens of non-silver printing processes and their variations are not mentioned. Colour photographic processes have been omitted completely, although there is no indication that the book is restricted to black-and-white images. The various pre-1935 mosaic screen processes based on the principle of additive colour synthesis are of great historical interest and will likely receive renewed attention in the near future since the Polaroid Corporation's instant motion picture system, "Polavision," is based on the additive colour principle. The major colour photographic processes based on the subtractive principle, Kodachrome and Agfacolor, have been invented within the first hundred years of photography, but images made by these processes are not treated, although the Kodachrome process is mentioned briefly in the chapter on 35 mm cameras. Early examples of these two processes are now very rare, but they are also of value in the study of the stability of dyes used in colour photography. Annoying are the frequent references made to the monetary value of historical photographic images and equipment.

Much useful information is tucked away in the appendixes. One deals with the dating of photographic equipment, another gives the dates of manufacture and formats of most cameras produced by the Eastman Kodak Company, information which custodians of negative collections will find helpful. Kodak roll film dimensions are summarized in a separate table. Another short appendix treats the maintenance of the photographica collection and deals with the care of daguerreotypes, treatment of old leather and cleaning the various parts of a camera and bellows. A list of museums of photography in North America, Europe and Japan and a glossary completes this section of the book. Canadian readers will recognize that the photograph from the Ernest Brown Collection on page 180 is not from the "Federal Canadian Archives" but rather the Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta in Edmonton.

Anyone interested in the history of photography, particularly in its technical aspects, will derive ample benefit from reading this book. The serious scholar, however, will

also consult other recently published volumes of similar scope as well as the classical works of a more systematic approach to the history of photography.

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A Terrible Beauty: The Art of Canada at War. HEATHER ROBERTSON.
Toronto: James Lorimer, 1977. 240 p. ill. ISBN 0 88862 144 2 \$29.95.

To coincide with Remembrance Day, 11 November 1977, an exhibition of Canadian war art from the two world wars opened at the Rodman Hall Arts Centre in St. Catharines, Ontario. About a month earlier *A Terrible Beauty: The Art of Canada at War*, billed as the official catalogue for the exhibition, appeared in bookstores across Canada. During the next two years the exhibition will be on gallery tour within Canada, coming to rest for its final show from 1 December 1979 through 20 February 1980 at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa. The book/catalogue together with the gallery tour constitute an ambitious, collaborative undertaking. While chiefly the work of Heather Robertson, author of the book's eight-page introduction and selector of the war writings and the exhibit's 102 works of war art reproduced in the book, the publishing of *A Terrible Beauty* and the mounting of the travelling exhibit awaited the assistance of the publisher James Lorimer and Joan Murray, Director of the Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa. Necessary cooperation also came from the National Museums of Canada.

Those responsible for *A Terrible Beauty* have performed a service for Canadians: the rescue of remarkable works of war art from the oblivion to which most of them had been consigned in a warehouse of the Canadian War Museum. One can only speculate with Heather Robertson that perhaps revulsion from the subject of war kept the war art collection from any major public showing since 1946. Post-World War II books on Canadian art have not, however, completely ignored the work of Canadian war artists.¹ Charles Comfort's own *Artist at War* (Toronto, 1956), parts of which *A Terrible Beauty* uses, presents graphically and verbally one artist's experience of war. But not before *A Terrible Beauty* has so much of the rich legacy of art bequeathed Canadians by our war artists been reproduced in one book.

Art is one of the means men and women have of confronting and transcending the brevity of human life, but war, which cruelly sharpens that brevity, can overwhelm and paralyze an artist. Yet Canadian war artists captured and apotheosized into works of art the experiences of two generations of Canadians caught in the toils of war. From the unspeakable misery, devastation and drudgery, to the compassion and snatched moments of repose and even revelry, the subjects are as varied as the styles. Women artists, protected from combat, showed life behind the front, as in H. Mabel May's glowing "Women Making Shells" from the First World War and, from the Second, Paraskeva Clark's energetic "Parachute Riggers" and Molly Lamb Bobak's gossamer "C.W.A.C. Wedding in the Seminary's Chapel." More directly exposed to the brutality and destruction, male artists of both wars testified, in their most powerful statements, to the staggering horrors of war: F.H. Varley's "Sunken Road" shows a battle-scarred stretch of the First World War's western front, strewn with dead bodies.

¹ Helen J. Dow, *The Art of Alex Colville* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 48-52, 54-59; Paul Duval, *Four Decades: The Canadian Group of Painters and Their Contemporaries, 1930-1970* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 74-81; J. Russell Harper, *Painting in Canada: A History* (Toronto, 1966), pp. 283-87, 335-36, 340-41; Peter Mellen, *The Group of Seven* (Toronto, 1970), pp. 70-77, 80.