

This little book is a valuable tool for small museums and archives suffering from a shortage of personnel and funds. Although the material listed is based on American examples, it may easily be adapted to meet Canadian needs. In essence, *Interpretation* is but an introduction to the subject, but it is a very good one.

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A Social History of Museums: What the Visitors Thought. KENNETH HUDSON. London: Macmillan Press, © 1975. 210 p. plates. ISBN 0 333 14441 \$19.90.

Archivists should expect to find some inspiration from a book devoted to the history of museums written, supposedly, from the perspective of the viewing public. After all, archival displays and museum exhibitions serve similar functions in that a conscious effort is made to present materials to satisfy some aesthetic or informational purpose. *A Social History of Museums* will be a disappointment to archives and museum professionals alike. Not only does it fall short of providing a comprehensive picture of the needs and wishes of the museum visitor, but also it fails to reveal a systematic appraisal of the historical development of museums. The numerous weaknesses are associated principally with poor organization and an excessive serving of the obvious.

Throughout his book Hudson pursues that elusive phrase "the public interest" as he traces the evolution of museums from the seventeenth century to the present. He discusses the commonly perceived notion of the rights and character of the museum visitor and the changes in that conception. The nineteenth century witnessed, with some qualifications, certain improvements in the lot of the museum visitor. Autocratic owners who out of generosity had permitted limited admittance to their museums were succeeded by the academically oriented museum director who may have supervised the opening of the museum to the public but, seeing this public as intellectually inferior, often treated it with indifference or disdain. Detailed examination of the welfare of the museum visitor is undertaken in chapters devoted to the arrangement of exhibits and building design, educational programmes, and modern market research techniques.

Although many of the observations made by Hudson may be of interest, they are presented in an impressionistic fashion with virtually no logical flow from chapter to chapter or even within chapters. Pervasive padding assumes several forms, ranging from gratuitous quotations (including Latin verse) and forty-seven pages of photographs of museums with accompanying notes, to copies of opinion questionnaires devised to monitor the attitudes of museum visitors. No attempt is made to relate the text directly either to the photographs or to the questionnaires. Only the most tolerant reader should peruse this book, the underlying theme of which deserves a much better airing than that attempted by Hudson.

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Images of Sport in Early Canada. Images de sport dans le Canada d'autrefois.
Compiled by NANCY J. DUNBAR; introduction by HUGH MACLENNAN.
Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1976. 95 p. ill. ISBN 0 7735 0246 7 bd. \$14.95; ISBN 0 7735 244 0 pa. \$7.50.

This is the catalogue for an exhibition of nineteenth and early twentieth century sports equipment, prizes, and photographs presented at the McCord Museum in Montreal in