

MUSEUMS, EDUCATION, AND
COMMUNITY: A REFLECTION ON
THEORY AND PRACTICE

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MUSEUMS, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY: A REFLECTION ON THEORY AND PRACTICE

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Abstract

The tectonic social upheavals of the 16th through the 18th centuries that produced the bourgeois state left Western society with a new set of social institutions, including the modern museum. With a *raison d'être* simultaneously dependent on and at odds with the march of time, the modern museum enjoys a false air of permanence, for it is clearly an historically contingent institution and there is no guarantee as to its future.

The *Wunderkammer* and the princely gallery—the modern museum's important predecessors—expose the institution's potential as a site for the expansion of knowledge that drives social change, as well as its potential as a site for the inculcation of traditional values and the status quo. The evolution of the educational functions of the modern museum traces the course of a complex and increasingly tense dialectic that highlights how much Western society has changed and how urgently its institutions need to renegotiate their relationship with “the public.”

This thesis argues that broad societal shifts of the past half-century require the museum to abandon its established theoretical and operational models and to embrace a community-based vision that draws on the best new museological theory. Theoretical ballast for the argument is provided by Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, Jurgen Habermas, and Michel Foucault, and also by Maxine Greene, Henry Giroux, and Paulo Friere in their elaboration of social theory within a specifically pedagogical context.

All these theories suggest the museum acts as some form of mediating institution between the realm of the state and the realm of the individual or citizen.

The thesis juxtaposes two cases of museum practice from the early 1990s—the Royal Ontario Museum’s disastrous *Into the Heart of Africa* exhibit, and the controversial deaccessioning of human skeletal remains from the Peterborough Centennial Museum and Archives. It analyzes the museological models and values behind each case, and suggests that the programming undertaken in the Peterborough case provides a rich concrete example of successful community-based museum with lessons that might be applied by much larger institutions despite their broader mandates, and their multiplex and far-flung audiences.

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Introduction

Some observers call this a “new golden age”¹ of the museum, pointing to the fact that there are more museums today than ever before, with new ones opening all the time. Certainly, following World War II the number of museums in North America increased dramatically. G. Ellis Burcaw reports that there were approximately twenty-five hundred museums in the United States in 1940 and as many as seven thousand in 1974. Closer to home, “...the province of Alberta had eighteen museums in 1952, thirty-nine in 1964, and eighty-six in 1971.”² Canada’s centennial celebrations significantly stimulated production in the cultural sector, with communities across the country establishing formal museums with the assistance of federal funding.

Museums have not only grown in number, but seem to be playing an increasingly central role in cultural life. Michael Levin documents the rapid increase of museum visitors during the twentieth century: attendance at the National Gallery in London rose from 628,548 in 1938 to 1,147,226 in 1960 reaching 2,577,723 in 1979. In the early 1940s, fifty million visitors were attracted to American museums. By 1967, this figure rose to 560 million. During British Museum’s first twenty years—from 1753 to 1773, an average of only 10,000 visitors were admitted annually as compared with the 1979 figures of 3,081,141.

Some seasoned museum professionals claim that this expansion will continue well into the future. In his keynote address to the 1993 Canadian Museums Association conference, Director of Glasgow Museums and Galleries Julian Spalding argued that the forces of globalization would make museums important centres for the preservation, celebration, and reflection of local and national identity. He claimed that with the increasing homogeneity of cultures, people would turn to museums for an experience of what is different and unique. Increasing tourism would necessitate investment in the expansion of tourist attractions, including museums. The technological revolution and the increased access to information would lead to museum-based distance learning opportunities. With a glut of virtual experiences provided electronically, museums would also answer a growing craving for experience of the authentic.

However, others would temper Spalding's optimistic projections, arguing that this today's boom is not simply the most exponential manifestation of an historically persistent linear growth for museums. In his address at the 1996 conference of the Museums Association of Quebec, Patrick J. Boylan, then Vice-President of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), described the history of museums in terms of cycles of birth, development, decline, and death. He argued that the past two centuries have seen five such cycles—the current one beginning after World War II and resulting in an unprecedented proliferation of new museums.³ Boylan suggested that this latest period of expansion might already have peaked and that, although the West's great cultural cathedrals, such as the British Museum or the Louvre, are not in jeopardy, the future of the vast majority of today's museums, both large and small, is uncertain.

While there is no doubt that the increasing attendance rates reflect a dramatic widening of the museum audience, they say nothing about curatorial practice or the educational methodology employed by museums in their dealings with the public—and it may be in this regard that the future of the institution is least certain. From the last half of the twentieth century, a radical academic critique of the modern museum as academic, elitist, and remote, along with the professionalization of museum practice and a growing emphasis on the institution's educational role, has led to a current crisis of institutional identity. There is no consensus, inside or outside the field, about the current role of the museum in society. As Karsten Schubert notes, "The present is marked by a deep uncertainty about how museums and their role in society should be interpreted..."⁴

In this thesis, I examine the relationship of museums to education and community. I start with the premise that museums are historically contingent institutions and that there is no guarantee as to their future. The relationship of the museum to community, as we generally understand it, has been dominated by what I refer to throughout as the modern model of museum practice. This institutional model arose in Europe as part of the great historical emergence of the bourgeois state out of monarchical absolutism, and was consolidated during an era of colonial conquests and international empires. Broad shifts in social relations over the past three centuries, seemingly accelerating since the middle of the last, have strained the foundations of all social institutions.

With the relationship of museums to their communities in a state of flux, the traditional curatorial practices associated with the modern museum model are no longer effective.

In this period of intellectual and organizational foment, museums face the challenges and opportunities associated with reinventing themselves. Alternate models present themselves in response to various environmental pressures, from the changing face of public funding for cultural pursuits to the latest distillations of social philosophy and history.

I will identify and argue in support of a community development approach that has been emerging in recent museological literature and practice. My argument will illustrate the potentials of a community development approach with an analysis of a case study—the repatriation of human skeletal remains to the Curve Lake band by the Peterborough Centennial Museum and Archives.

En route, I will describe the origins of the museum and outline its historical development, as I feel much of the current debate amongst museum professionals can only be fully understood within the broader context of the trajectory of bourgeois liberalism. My specific aim in indulging in this historical foray is to demonstrate how deeply ingrained are the modern museum's values and operating principles and why the model is so resistant to change.

I will also discuss the Royal Ontario Museum's exhibition *Into the Heart of Africa* as a means of highlighting the deficiencies of the modern museum as a viable institutional model in an increasingly wealthy, educated, pluralistic, and disaffected society. I will attempt to tie all of this discussion together with reference to the growing importance of education and educational theory to museum practice and the revitalization of the civil space.

Ultimately, the relation between museums, education, and the community hinges on fundamental questions concerning the purpose of museums. Who and what are museums for? And who should decide this? Without consideration of such issues, museums risk serving a purpose that is self-defined and, therefore, of value only in its own terms.

The Scope and Limitations of this Study

Museums have become so diverse and multifaceted that measuring the merits of one by comparing it to another is a risky endeavour. As Stephen Weil has indicated:

“Museums are so extraordinarily varied in their origin, discipline, scale, governance, structure, collections, sources of funding, endowment, staffing, facilities, and community setting that meaningful comparisons between one and another are rarely possible.”⁵ Despite such caveats, I have attempted to synthesize the information and analysis of several streams of literature to provide what I hope is a sufficiently coherent snapshot of the current curatorial crossroads. However, a few words are required at the outset on the sources that support this study, the considerations that limit its arguments, its historical and geographical scope, and what I mean by “museum,” the “modern museum,” and the “new museum.”

The thesis draws on several streams of literature in its analysis. For broad conceptual foundations, the thesis turns to the discourses of cultural studies and draws, in particular, from selected works of Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, Jurgen Habermas, and Antonio Gramsci to highlight the social construction of institutions. It also relies on sources in museum studies and cultural studies theory, such as Eilean Hooper-

Greenhill and Tony Bennett, to establish the argument that, despite the modern museum's persistence in the official and vernacular imagination, its actual persuasiveness as a model has waned and this has left museum practitioners seeking alternatives. Equally important are selected works of Paulo Friere, Henry Giroux, and Maxine Greene, whose theories on education and community also inform the arguments put forward in this paper.

Perhaps more directly relevant are numerous contributions by Canadian, American, and British museum professionals whose monographs, journal articles, and conference proceedings comment on the nature and future of museums and the curatorial approaches of certain cultural projects or institutions. Special attention is paid to reports and conference proceedings of the Canadian Museum Association, along with contributions in *Muse*, the organization's official journal. Newspaper articles and other journalistic sources supplement the literature drawn directly from the museum community to provide a broader perspective and response to museum practice.

This study focuses on Canadian museums, while holding that museums of all stripes in the economically privileged nations of the Western world have shared the same general experience and evolution since the 1960s. Certainly, the history of American and British museums since that decade both reflects and informs our own, despite distinctions in national culture and cultural policy. Admittedly, the research behind the arguments in this paper is focused on the practice of *selected* Canadian museums and is, therefore, only partial. But the analysis in this thesis, in the measure in which it deals

with broad and common issues, is intended to be relevant to the museum community generally. Rather than pretending to be exhaustive, it is meant to be illustrative.

The “modern museum” I refer to throughout is a Western model with classical antecedents and deep roots in the birth of the bourgeois state. At Alexandria in 290 BC, Ptolemy I established a centre of learning dedicated to the muses.⁶ It included the famous library in addition to collections in all of the museum fields, an astronomical observatory, and facilities for research and for teaching. As an educational establishment, it had no rivals in ancient times and was, as Burcaw notes, the first real museum. It was almost two thousand years later before Western civilization again had comparable institutions. Duncan Cameron has studied museum-like institutions outside the two or three hundred year-old modern European/American model, in an attempt to identify an archetype of the museum. He reminds us that “the museum is a persistent and pervasive idea that has been manifesting itself in different cultures at different times and in different guises for thousands of years.”⁷ I have limited the scope of this study to Western democracies and have relied heavily on Anglo-American examples. Without doubt, different boundaries could have been drawn.

In Great Britain, there is an understood distinction between the “art gallery” and the “museum” that does not exist in the North American usage. The Museums Association of the United Kingdom defines the museum as, “an institution which collects, documents, preserves, exhibits and interprets material evidence and associated information for the public benefit.”⁸ While, technically, this language could include art

galleries, in Great Britain museums and art galleries are generally considered and referred to as categorically different institutions.

In North America, the museum and the “national” or “heritage-oriented” art gallery tend to be considered as the same sort of institution. This is clear in the American Association of Museums’ definition of the museum as “a non-profit permanent, established institution...for the purpose of conserving and preserving, studying, interpreting, assembling and exhibiting to the public for its instruction and enjoyment objects and specimens of educational and cultural value, including artistic, scientific...historical and technological material.”⁹ Here, I follow the North American usage, and use the term “museum” to include significant non-commercial galleries, or use the terms “art gallery,” “art museum,” and “museum” interchangeably in reference to heritage collections of art.

It might be argued that art museums differ categorically from other museums, on the basis that viewing a work of art is fundamentally different from viewing an artifact from an historical, ethnographic or scientific collection. Artifacts—flint chips and pottery shards—generally make sense only when viewed in some broader context, whereas works of art are presumably complete and sufficient entities that compel our contemplation. As Raymond Monpetit contends:

Art museums, which display explicitly significant objects, are not the same thing as thematic museums or museums devoted to some specific discipline (history museums, science museums, natural science museums, historic site museums and so on). The latter display a wide variety of specimens and artifacts, most of which were not originally intended to make any kind of statement

whatever, but are usually accompanied by interpretive materials that weave an explicit account about them.¹⁰

While Monpetit raises an interesting question, a detailed response would be beyond the scope of this study. The assumption underlying the arguments I present here is that works of art do not, in fact, speak for themselves¹¹, and that, if meaning may be seen as socially constructed, the need for context mitigates this fine distinction between art and artifact.

Museums vary widely in the size and scope of their collection, their mission and constituency or public, as well as their administration and funding. The two case studies contrasted in this thesis represent institutions at nearly opposite ends of the spectrum. The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) is a “national-style” institution on an impressive scale, with nearly four hundred permanent employees, annual operating expenditures of over twenty million dollars, a priceless inventory of over six million artifacts, several curatorial departments, and an international reputation for excellent research. The Peterborough Centennial Museum and Archives (PCMA) is a small historical museum under municipal governance, with an annual budget of under 300,000 dollars and fewer than 25,000 artifacts, and a decidedly local reach and focus.

The vast differences between the ROM and the PCMA may limit the conclusions that can be drawn from a comparison of the two—for example, community-based curatorial practice might be a simpler and more intuitive approach for the PCMA, given its small scale and ready access to stakeholders, than it might be for museums of much larger scope like the ROM. However, all museums have their community, or communities, and the principles of community-based curatorial practice are adaptable and need not be

adopted wholesale by all organizations—in fact, their very flexibility is what makes them *community* based. I feel that the large national museums have much to learn from their smaller, local counterparts, which seem to be more able to experiment with their structures and functions and respond to the evolving configurations of contemporary society.

Since the late 1960s, new types of museums have emerged, many of them small, local institutions located away from large urban centres, and the museum definition has broadened. Membership in the Canadian Museums Association reflects this growing institutional diversity, now including collection-based museums, art galleries, science centres, as well as archives, historic sites and monuments, planetariums, observatories, aquariums, and botanical gardens. Further complicating any easy definition of the museum, divisions between the various disciplines of museums and their collections that once existed have become blurred over the past several decades. Today, a natural history museum may contain live specimens and a conservatory, a human history museum may include modern art and sculpture, and a science centre may integrate the approaches of an aquarium and zoo.

The balance of museum activities has also shifted, and the dynamics of the museum in society have evolved considerably with education and communication functions now playing a *de facto* role as integral to the institution as the traditionally privileged roles of collection and conservation. This constitutes one of the sea changes that have brought the modern museum model into question.

In its modern guise, the word “museum” has been in use in the English language for approximately three hundred years. The Ashmolean Museum of Oxford University, founded in 1683, is reportedly “the first institution in Western Europe to call itself a museum.”¹² In this study, I will be comparing an established model of museum practice—the “modern museum”—to an emerging model often called the “new museum.” The modern museum refers to the powerful model of administrative and curatorial practice consolidated in late nineteenth and early twentieth century that still influences cultural policy development and dominates popular conceptions of what a museum is and ought to be. The new museum represents an alternate set of practices and principles that has emerged over the past thirty years, and that is rooted in the rise of social history within academia, the establishment of museum studies programs in Europe and North America, the graduation of a generation of young curators from these programs and their recent work in the field.

While the theme throughout this thesis is the persistence of the modern museum model, the radical soul-searching apparent amongst museum professionals lends considerable weight to Schubert’s reminder that the institution is far from immutable:

The idea of the museum plays such a central and important role in the way Western culture is defined and understood that it is generally forgotten how relatively new—and complex, as well as fragile—a concept it is. Instead we have come to believe that the museum is a place beyond reproach: neutral, objective, and rational.¹³

The Modern Museum

The national public institution we know as the modern museum evolved out of earlier private forms of systematic collection. It developed over the course of several centuries, from the Renaissance through the Industrial Revolution, as part of the great social transformation that produced the bourgeois nation-state. Thus, it is deeply inscribed with the same ideologies that marked the social reform movements and the new technologies of liberal governance. While it may be seen as embodying a regime of knowledge and power that continues to structure social relations today, the modern museum is also the locus of competing interests and influences, whose dialectics raise important questions about the future of the institution.

In this chapter, I draw together a number of secondary sources to set the modern museum in its historical context and to construct a coherent account of its development as a social institution. Emphasizing certain influences I feel are most salient, I rely on selected analyses from amongst a great number of contributions in the field of museology. Those whose work I most often cite tend to found their arguments about the museum on a bedrock of social theory attributable to Foucault, Habermas, and Gramsci. In subsequent chapters, with reference to specific exhibitions, I shall attempt to show how the ideological framework of the modern museum informs contemporary museum practice despite its increasingly apparent shortcomings and emerging alternatives.

Antecedents of the Modern Museum

The modern museum as we understand it today did not materialize *ex nihilo* and certainly no abdication of reason is reflected in the assumption that the act of systematic collection has been practiced in some form or other across most times and cultures. Cameron reminds us that the European/American model is historically contingent, “a fascinating artifact of its time and place,” and draws our attention to the existence of museums and galleries in China and Japan as early as the second century BC, as well as the hoards and treasures of the early Indian and Arab worlds.¹⁴ Cameron extends his view beyond the Western horizon in order to identify the essence of the museum phenomenon. My purpose here is a narrower one, and I focus on simply identifying the antecedents of the type of national public museum commonly found in Western democratic countries.

During the Middle Ages, the great churches and abbeys of Europe accumulated relics and curiosities, but these collections were generally integral to the worship functions of religious institutions. From the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, however, the systematic collection and display of objects became an increasingly widespread and secular pursuit. European aristocracies began amassing significant private collections, and creating specialized and separate spaces for their display and safekeeping. Within this new phenomenon, we can differentiate two types of private collections as precursors of the modern museum: the *Wunderkammer* and the princely gallery.

The *Wunderkammer*, or “cabinet of curiosities,” appears an eclectic and highly personalized collection responding to the particular intellectual interests of the

collector. Traditional museum histories sometimes credit the *Wunderkammer* with the target of cataloguing the world, but more often characterize it as a disordered jumble of unconnected artifacts of dubious value and authenticity. Burcaw reports a description of the treasure room of Albrecht, Duke of Bavaria, as housing “some eight hundred paintings, an egg which an abbot had found within another egg, manna which fell from heaven during a famine, a stuffed elephant, and a basilisk.”¹⁵ In most of these traditional histories, the museum’s development from chaos to order is recounted as a function of science’s progress from error to truth.

However idiosyncratic its collections appear to contemporary eyes, certain organizing principles are discernable when the *Wunderkammer* is considered as a product of the Renaissance worldview. To thinkers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the secrets of the universe were revealed through interpretation—not reason—and a divination of signs and correspondences drove the process of knowing. Krzysztof Pomian argues that the cabinet of curiosities exemplified an epistemological interregnum between theology and science. Free from restrictions placed on inquiry by religion and those that would be placed on it by the growing requirements of scientific rationality, “curiosity spontaneously fixed on all that was most rare and most inaccessible, most astonishing and most enigmatic.”¹⁶

Within this framework of understanding, Hooper-Greenhill depicts the cabinet of curiosities as a sort of three-dimensional representational system, “bringing together a number of material things and arranging them in such a way as to represent or recall either an entire or a partial world picture.”¹⁷ Such accounts allow us to see in the

Wunderkammer the function of storing and disseminating knowledge so critical to the modern museum. These collections detached things from their functional contexts and fashioned new meaning out of new juxtapositions with the intent of delighting, amusing, or stimulating the contemplation of the viewer.

Originally, princely galleries served as reception rooms. Their lavish ornamentation and the collections they showcased were meant to dazzle and overwhelm foreign visitors and local dignitaries, while reflecting the wealth, power, and taste of the prince and legitimizing his rule. As the collections of the European royal families grew steadily in scale, they had to be housed in special wings or even separate buildings erected for the purpose. Carol Duncan notes the importance of this new tendency to create specialized spaces: “These collections, which were often displayed in impressive halls or galleries built especially for them, set certain precedents for later museums.”¹⁸

The Uffizi palace in Florence is often cited as one of the earliest prototypes of the modern museum. The construction of the palace began in 1560, when Duke Cosimo I de Medici decided to build a separate structure to house the administrative offices (uffizi) of the Florentine polity. When Cosimo died in 1574, his son, Francesco I supervised completion of the construction, establishing a set laboratories for scientific and alchemic experimentation in the west wing, and consigning the family’s collection of ancient sculptures in the east wing. Francesco's successors built upon the original grand ducal collection with new acquisitions of paintings, sculptures, precious and rare objects. By the seventeenth century, new rooms on the second floor had been arranged to display masterworks and the galleries could be visited on request.

The tendency to broaden access to princely galleries accelerated over the course of the following three hundred years, but these prototypical museums still constituted socially enclosed spaces. The eighteenth-century concept of the public did not include the popular classes. Admittance was generally confined to aristocratic society and governed by the rules of court protocol and aristocratic etiquette. For example, “to visit the Hermitage, which was in theory open to the public, one had to be dressed in the same outfit required of a visitor to the royal court.”¹⁹ While the princely galleries remained essentially private institutions, their conscription of high culture in the structuring of social relations is important to our comprehension of the modern museum.

The French Revolution provided the conditions of emergence for the modern museum and the Louvre formalized most of its functions. As a palace for the kings of France, the Louvre had been the repository for extensive royal collections for centuries.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the French crown had been planning to open the collection to public viewing. But, in 1793, the revolutionary government, seizing an opportunity to dramatize the creation of the new republican state, appropriated the king’s art collection, and declared the Louvre a national museum.

Rupturing the powers of church and monarchy, and introducing a constitution whose legitimacy purported to derive from the people and pure reason, the revolution focused a new ideological lens on the established practices of collecting. The social tumult initiated by the revolution involved a massive reorganization of property, first in France, then later under Napoleon, across all Europe.²⁰ The transfer of significant

quantities of cultural and scientific property to the public domain and housing them within institutions administered by the state for the benefit of an extended general public represented a new economy of objects. This combined with the principles of rationalist philosophy to shape all aspects of the modern museum, from its broadest mandates to its most detailed methodologies.

The forces of anti-clericalism, republicanism, and imperialism catalyzed the systematic collection of art and artifacts on an unprecedented scale. The nationalization of ecclesiastical property, along with that of the aristocracy and royal family, and the subsequent conquest of Europe under Napoleon detached many thousands of things from their original contexts and brought them under the ownership of the state.²¹ Hooper-Greenhill helps us understand how this flood of objects contributed to the development of new collecting practices guided by the application of rationalist principles: “The state risked the loss of material that would be untraceable without firm identification and documentation...[thus] a ‘Commission of Monuments’ was established with an initial aim of drawing up an inventory of the entire ‘art treasures’ of France.”²² The sorting, classifying, and cataloguing of objects of artistic and scientific interest, which we take for granted as standard practice in today’s museum, have their roots here.

Confiscated works were gathered in newly established art depots, which were often the recently expropriated convents, where they were identified, catalogued, documented, repaired, and assessed for their seditious potential. The selection of items that were to be displayed and their separation of these from the items that would be stored or

otherwise disposed of led to the development of new processes. From the vast mass of material available, Bennett notes, "...collections were rearranged in accordance with the principle of *representativeness* rather than that of *rarity*."²³ With this new embarrassment of riches, the concept of the reserve collections emerged, along with the concept of the temporary exhibition, mounted in relation to current events.

The Louvre was not the first royal collection to be turned into a museum—Vienna's Belvedere Palace and the Dresden Gallery contained royal collections that had been made accessible to broader sections of the population at earlier points in the eighteenth century. However, the Louvre's transformation was politically significant and influential, because, "it radically and explicitly redefined the privileged and restricted space of the princely gallery as something belonging to the French people, the 'nation.'"²⁴

In Great Britain, the very different path of emergence of the modern museum further illuminates the close relationship between its development and that of the nation-state. The British Museum was founded in 1759 as a repository for a natural history collection and a set of manuscripts bequeathed to the nation and, for the first fifty years of its existence, it served not as a showplace of art or artifacts, but rather as a semi-public reference library. It was the domain of learned gentlemen, and even to them access was restricted. Schubert recounts the experience of a German historian who visited the museum in 1785:

Persons desiring to visit the museum had first to give their credentials at the office...it was then only after a period of about fourteen days that they were likely to receive a ticket of admission.²⁵

The museum was open four days a week and each of the eight groups of fifteen visitors admitted per day was required to stay together and was limited to two hours viewing. Despite its small overtures in acknowledgement of the public, the museum existed as an end in itself, much more in the spirit of the princely gallery or *Wunderkammer* than the emerging national museums on the continent.

The creation of a national art gallery in Great Britain was equally complicated. With the liberalization of continental monarchies and the spread of republicanism, the Louvre's "national gallery" model had been replicated in one form or another all over Europe. By the end of the nineteenth century, every Western nation, with the exception of Great Britain, boasted at least one important public art museum. One factor retarding the establishment of a national gallery was the absence, or invisibility, of a significant royal collection. Charles I, who came to the throne in 1625 and whose ideas about monarchy influenced by the pomp and formality of the Spanish court, had begun to establish a spectacular collection along continental lines. His palace featured such extravagances as a great hall entirely painted by Rubens. His appreciation of ceremonial display, however, was not shared by his Puritan executioners, "...who pointedly auctioned off a large part of the king's collection."²⁶ After Charles I, British monarchs kept rather low public profiles as art collectors and art patrons. While they might still collect art, political realities discouraged them from displaying it in ways that recalled the absolutist ambitions of continental royalty.

In Great Britain, then, collections that might comprise the foundation of a national gallery would have to come from other sources, aristocrats or wealthy bourgeois

merchants. In fact, extraordinary private collections were offered up on the condition that Parliament create a national gallery, but these overtures were steadfastly resisted. It was well into the nineteenth century before there was a national gallery in London. John Angerstein, founder of Lloyds of London and a Russian-born Jew who lacked formal education and was never fully admitted into the highest ranks of British society, supplied the collection that would become the nucleus of the National Gallery. After his death in 1823, the state was allowed to purchase the best of his collection below market value, as well as the remainder of a lease on his impressive residence on Pall Mall. The new gallery opened there in May, 1824.

Great Britain's reluctance to embrace the national museum was a function of the broader political context in which the nation-state was evolving. In contrast to France, where the revolution signaled a clear and radical break with monarchical rule, Great Britain had gradually evolved limitations on the monarchy and established what amounted to an oligarchical rule of aristocrats through Parliament. Civil society of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England was made up of a community of propertied citizens whose interests and education made them, in their view, most fit to rule. Proposals to extend access to the masses were clearly a threat to this ruling elite, and were read as efforts to further a larger political project of redefining nationalism and expanding the established boundaries of citizenship.

Our current understanding of the concepts of "nation" and "nationalism" make it difficult to imagine how differently they were interpreted historically. However, in Great Britain, "ideas of the nation as a people defined and unified by unique spiritual

yearnings or “racial” characteristics are foreign to the early nineteenth-century political discourse.”²⁷ In fact, “nation” was a code word for the middle classes—that is, not “we” who govern, but those who are in our charge.

For those locked out of power, the opening up of traditionally restricted ritual spaces and redefining their content was precisely a means of advancing the claims of the “nation” against oligarchy. Over the first few decades of the nineteenth century, groups of industrialists, merchants, disenfranchised professionals, and religious dissenters mounted attacks on both the structure and policies of government challenging rule by the aristocratic culture. As Duncan reports, “throughout the 1820s, a strong opposition, often...backed by a vigorous press, demanded middle-class access to political power and the creation of new cultural and educational institutions.”²⁸

The British oligarchs’ unwillingness to create a national gallery or to extend access to the British Museum also reflects the importance of collection and display in the formation and maintenance of aristocratic class identity. Duncan contends that “an eighteenth-century picture collection was contiguous with a series of like spaces (including, not incidentally, the newly founded British Museum) that together mapped out the social circuit of a class.”²⁹ Galleries like the British Museum, then, addressed, imagined, and produced the only public then admissible in Great Britain—well-born, educated men of taste.

Given Great Britain’s social conservatism and resistance to republicanism, it is not surprising that the modern museum was slower to take root there than it was on the Continent. The process of British state building and the development of the symbols

and public spaces of the modern nation-state involved no dramatic, revolutionary breaks with the past but rather an organic evolution based on existing social structures and forms. But, however protracted, piecemeal, and partial the process, the princely gallery eventually gave way to the modern museum in Great Britain.

Habermas characterized late eighteenth-century European society as divided between the state and the court on one hand and, on the other, civil society and the sphere of private intimacy formed by the newly constituted conjugal family. Mediating the relations between these spheres was an array of new literary, artistic, and cultural institutions in which new forms of assembly, debate, critique, and commentary were developed. The new cultural markets, in their separation from both court and the state, allowed the formative bourgeois public to meet and, in rendering itself visually present to itself, acquire a degree of corporate self-consciousness.

As educative and civilizing agencies, museums played a pivotal role in the formation of the modern state. A significant number of state-sponsored competitions for the design of museums took place in Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the requirements of these competitions, Bennett claims, one can see the emphasis shifting progressively away from organizing spaces of display for the private pleasure of the prince or aristocrat and towards an organization of space and vision that would enable museums to function as organs of public instruction.³⁰

The manifestation of power is an integral aspect of governance, a means of establishing and maintaining authority. The public floggings and triumphal parades associated with feudal and monarchical forms of government were part of an ideological economy that

reserved and consolidated power in the person of the sovereign. What museums provided the bourgeois state, in contrast to these periodic and excessive displays of power, was a forum for the permanent display of power within its new ideological framework—one that positioned the people as both the subjects and beneficiaries of power, so they could see it as, “...a force regulated and channeled by society’s ruling groups but for the good of all.”³¹

They also emerged as an important instrument for the self-display of bourgeois-democratic societies. Bennett describes the modern museum’s primary technology of control as one that “serves to regulate the crowd by making it visible to itself, by making the crowd itself the ultimate object of display. In this way, the museum contributes to and supports the liberalized mechanisms of governance required under the bourgeois nation-state, by transforming the crowd into a constantly surveyed, self-watching, self-regulating, and consistently orderly public—a society watching over itself.”³²

The New Representative Regime

The emergence of the modern public museum out of the princely gallery and the *Wunderkammer* represents a new ideological framework for the collecting impulse, and a reordering of relationships between the viewer and the objects on view. That the modern museum developed alongside, and, indeed, as an institutional component of, the bourgeois or liberal state is of critical importance. Foucault and those who have developed and critiqued his work have amply demonstrated how the invention of the bourgeois state was, in the broadest of terms, a rearticulation of the social relations of power and the technologies of control and surveillance.³³ My concern here is with the manifestations of these new relations and technologies of power in the museum context.

The French Revolution was founded on the legitimacy of the people and signaled the arrival of democratic culture—a radical discontinuity with absolutist modes of governance that had important consequences for the development of the modern museum. The old collecting practices of the king, the aristocracy, and the church were revised, taken over, and rearticulated in a new field of use. The collections themselves were torn out of their earlier spaces and groupings and were rearranged in other contexts as statements that proclaimed at once the tyranny of the old and the democracy of the new.

The Revolution transformed the museum from a symbol of arbitrary power into an instrument which, through the education of its citizens, was to serve the collective good of the state.³⁴ Appropriating royal, aristocratic, and church collections in the name of the people, it destroyed those items with irredeemable royal or feudal associations, and

arranged for the display of the remainder in accordance with rationalist principles of classification. Reconstituted as a national public institution, the Louvre put the old trappings of royal absolutism to new ideological use by presenting them as public property. As Duncan explains, "...they became the means through which a new relationship between the individual as citizen and the state as benefactor could be symbolically enacted."³⁵ Acting on behalf of the public, the museum would become the keeper of the nation's spiritual life and guardian of its culture.

Duncan describes the earlier representative systems of the *Wunderkammer* and princely gallery as aristocratic in nature. The viewer is called upon to recognize and interpret—without the help of labels—the distinctive qualities and relationships of the objects displayed. In so doing, the viewer's identity as gentleman and connoisseur is reinforced. He experiences himself as possessing a culture that marks him as a member of the elite. The modern museum, in contrast, "addresses its visitor as a bourgeois citizen who enters the museum in search of enlightenment and rationally understood pleasures. In the museum, this citizen finds a culture that unites him with other...citizens regardless of their individual social position."³⁶

From the Foucaultian perspective, the formation of the modern museum can be understood as proceeding from the appropriation of culture as an object of governance under the bourgeois state. Lewis Mumford's claim, "when display ceases to be merely a private gratification of the possessor, it has the possibility of becoming a means of public education,"³⁷ neatly encapsulates the ideological significance of the modern museum in this new context. The notion of a museum opened to the public (however

circumscribed) presented the prospect of harnessing the representative potential of a collection of objects to cultivate a constituency now constructed less in terms of subjects to the king's absolute authority and more in terms of citizens with a share in the interests of the nation-state.

In the French context, then, the emergence of the bourgeois state is contiguous with a notion that the education of the public is a matter of government. As Duncan notes, the instructive potential of the modern museum was certainly not lost on the republican administrators of the Louvre, who saw in it a power not only to symbolize the revolutionary achievement but also to educate the masses: "...it was through the arts that the public was to understand the Revolution's history, its purpose, and aims."³⁸

Jean-Jacques David made the didactic focus of this public institution clear: "The museum is not supposed to be a vain assemblage of frivolous luxury objects that serve only to satisfy idle curiosity. What it must be is an imposing school."³⁹

Shifting attention again from France to Britain, further understanding of the emergence of the bourgeois state and its impact on the evolution of the modern museum may be gained. As Bennett points out, the modern museum may begin with the Louvre but its developmental impetus shifts to Britain and later the United States, as in France the bourgeois state is "interrupted by a succession of royal and imperial restorations...."⁴⁰

In Great Britain, the broad changes transforming social relations and the technologies of governance were introduced incrementally and pragmatically, through the reform movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the gradual devolution of the powers of governance.

Social reformers sought improvements in the moral health of the popular classes through exposure to high culture. Generally, the arguments were positioned as pragmatic solutions to the mechanical problems of managing society, rather than enunciations of the inalienable rights of the people. Linda Colley has argued that “to encourage nationalism was to encourage an inclusive principle of identity that could too easily become the basis of a political demand to broaden the franchise.”⁴¹

From the perspective of the social reformers, exposure to the museum—along with other “rational recreations” such as attending public lectures, for example—appeared as an instrument capable of improving the moral health of the population. Culture is brought within the province of government, and the reform of the self is constructed as a legitimate area of social administration. Thomas Greenwood distills the social reform sentiment as it pertains to the museum in his 1888 history of the institution: “a Museum and a Free Library are as necessary for the mental and moral health of the citizens as good sanitary arrangements, water supply, and street lighting are for their physical health and comfort.”⁴²

Various benefits were projected as a result of opening of museums to the popular classes, from elevating the level of popular taste and design to diminishing the appeal of the tavern and increasing the sobriety and industriousness of the populace. However, it is clear that the ultimate and over-arching value of the public museum to society is its perceived ability to civilize the population—a function that stands in marked contrast to that of the princely gallery, which was simply to broadcast the power of the sovereign.

The ideological framework of the modern museum was fundamentally established in the transformation of European governing structures and technologies over the course of several centuries. However, a matrix of other factors also influenced the formation of the museum, and a closer look at the developments during the nineteenth century sheds some light on these. Monpetit identifies four major forces driving the expansion and development of museums during this period: research, ostentation, domination, and appropriation.

The nineteenth century was a period of extraordinary expansion for museums, both in Europe and in America. The majority of the national museums and a good proportion of the local authority and university museums in the United Kingdom, for example, were founded in the second half of the nineteenth century.⁴³ The fervent Victorian belief that the careful collection and meticulous cataloguing of things would advance knowledge and civilization, and a dearth of reproduction techniques available for recording the real world and capturing it so that it could be studied—so that the actual physical presence of the objects that were to be compared and classified was required—helps account for the proliferation of museums during this time.

Rationalist principles applied to the classification of objects radically changed the way they were presented and displayed. Sixteenth-century collections of the *Wunderkammer* or the princely gallery often included tables in the centre of the room containing mixed, three-dimensional material, with paintings in multiple tiers on the walls. In the modern museum, the miscellaneous *objets d'art* were removed to separate

spaces. Paintings previously mixed together, with attractiveness being the only criterion of inclusion, were regrouped in schools and to show histories.

This historicized framework of museum display was first developed in France:

“Diderot in 1765...had proposed a comprehensive scheme to use the collections as a ‘museum’, with distinct separations made between different types of artefact.”⁴⁴ By 1795, the *Musée des monuments français* exhibited art in galleries devoted to different periods with the visitor’s route leading from earlier to later periods. At the same time, the Hotel de Cluny also classified and displayed artifacts by period in order to create a historically authentic milieu.

The reorganization signaled a departure from the ceremonial display of treasure intended to glorify the prince toward a more instructive arrangement focused on the nature and quality of the objects themselves. Duncan underlines the precedent set for curatorial practice: “It was the first time that pedagogic aims and art-historical methodology had played such a central role in the display of works of art.”⁴⁵ The new curatorial approach would remain a model for European and American museums well into the first decades of the twentieth century: “In New York, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, and other American cities, museums were carefully laid out around the Louvre’s organizing theme of the great civilizations, with Egypt, Greece, and Rome leading to a centrally placed Renaissance.”⁴⁶

Schubert speculates that one of the effects of this new curatorial approach was a tempering of the Louvre’s implicit political radicalism and the provision of an alternate rationale for the establishment or maintenance of public museums in other European

states, most of which were monarchies.⁴⁷ Given the political conservatism in Great Britain, it seems plausible that an emphasis on the educational and scientific potentials of the museum would find more support than one based on the forthright extension of the franchise to the popular classes. However, the general persuasiveness of the Louvre's new curatorial approach is perhaps better understood as its compatibility with the social and intellectual developments in the mid-nineteenth century.

The history of a number of institutions, both in Europe and the United States, shows how within capitalism, great fortunes and great collections were also interrelated. The capitalist economy led to the creation of colossal fortunes in an age when there was no such thing as income tax. The princely gallery's logic of ostentation is discernable in the establishment of some America's greatest museums, as a new moneyed class discovered fresh ways of projecting vivid images of its recently acquired power. According to Monpetit, knowledge was subordinate to the prestige garnered by those who endowed their communities with institutions that were an ornament to a city and served to educate its citizens. Museums and collections, in whole or in part, commemorated the names of their founders—Henry Ford, John D. Rockefeller, and others—and served as monuments to the glory of prominent individuals and their acts of civic benevolence.

The modern museum was also shaped by the great world fairs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the first place, practically every large fair since the 1870s has resulted in the creation of new museums. Once a government had spent great sums of money assembling objects to be shown at a world fair, it could hardly throw these

objects away when the fair closed. World fairs evolved out of the smaller art and industrial exhibitions held at the national level throughout the nineteenth century. The first world fair was the Great Exhibition of Industry of All Nations held in London in 1851. It was highly successful, and immediately set the template for large exhibitions aimed at the general public as both educational and diversionary pursuits. That template would be copied repeatedly from the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876 to the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago in 1933–34, and even through to Expo held in Montreal in 1967, Vancouver in 1986, and other cities since then.

With the progressively systematic treatment of art, artifacts, and natural specimens throughout the nineteenth century, the scholarly functions of the museum assumed a greater profile. When the process of unprecedented growth and perpetual expansion of the great European museums effectively came to an end during the first decades of the twentieth century, these functions were further entrenched. Schubert reminds us that the phenomenal expansion of the modern museum during this period was the product of Western imperialism, which created the conditions within which it became possible to strip whole nations of their cultural heritage. As imperial power waned, “the flood of objects reaching the Western museums turned into a comparative trickle, necessitating a shift from acquisition and expansion to scholarship and display.”⁴⁸

The resistance of the British Museum to welcoming the popular classes underlines the modern museum’s role in formalizing and framing new social divisions based on access to high culture. Hooper-Greenhill argues that the modern museum is “an apparatus with two deeply contradictory functions; that of the elite temple of the arts, and that of a

utilitarian instrument for democratic education.”⁴⁹ The temple of the arts function combines with the curatorial focus on serious scholarship rather than popular education.

Lisa Roberts sees the fault line forming between popular education and scholarly research from the founding of the Smithsonian Institution, which reinforced the notion of museums as handmaidens to science and sites of serious education: “Joseph Henry, the Smithsonian’s first secretary, was adamant that...the Institution’s overriding commitment should be to the advancement of knowledge and not to popular education....”⁵⁰

Levin identifies two longstanding and opposing trends in attitudes about museums and their relationship to the masses with important implications for the deployment of educational technologies. On the one hand, there are serious efforts to transform the museum into an institution open to all segments of society. On the other, there is the attitude that the general public is incapable of appreciating the museum’s treasures.

This attitude is particularly present when the museum in question is an art museum. In his 1939 essay “Avant-garde and Kitsch,” Clement Greenberg counseled museums to focus on the elite, since the “rear guard” masses could never be drawn to “superior culture,” and would always naturally choose kitsch over true (avant-garde) art.⁵¹

The modern museum also institutes a division between the producers and the consumers of knowledge. As the resistance of the British Museum to open access demonstrates, “While the gallery is theoretically a public institution open to all, it has typically been appropriated by ruling elites as a key symbolic site for those performances of ‘distinction’ through which the cognoscenti differentiate themselves from the masses.”⁵²

This division is embodied in architectural form in the relations between those hidden spaces of the museum, where knowledge is produced and organized, and its public spaces, where knowledge is offered for passive consumption.

Conclusions

As a mediating institution between the state and the people, the modern museum is simultaneously a site for the empowerment of the citizen and an instrument for extending the regime's control. Burcaw claims that "museums are used as a medium for conveying information and establishing desirable public attitudes."⁵³ Yet, however serviceable a mouthpiece of the state and its dominant elite the institution has proven itself to be, it has also undeniably served as a source of enlightenment and education. Post-modern critiques have shown how the institution has also been a mechanism for the commodification of culture, detaching objects from their traditional contexts and manipulating their meaning. However, this has also allowed cultural products to be made generally available, to broader and broader publics.

The dialectic played out between these opposing forces over the course of the last two centuries has shaped the methodology and definition of the modern museum and still drives much of the discourse on the role and function of the institution today.

Generally, the movement for museum reform has been animated by two basic demands: first, that museums should be equally open and accessible to all; and second, that museums should adequately represent the cultures and values of different sections of the public.⁵⁴

From a Gramscian perspective, the museum may be positioned as part of a new set of relations between bourgeois state and people that is best understood as pedagogic in nature. Gramsci was among the first to distinguish between the coercive apparatuses of the state and those engaged in the organization of consent. Others later distinguished between “hard” and “soft” approaches to the nineteenth-century state’s role in the promotion of art and culture. The hard approach belonged to those institutions of schooling that exercised a forcible hold over their members, and that promulgated a systematic body of knowledge and skills to a specified audience. The soft approach belonged to institutions like museums, and worked “by example rather than by pedagogy, by entertainment rather than by disciplined schooling, and by subtlety and encouragement.”⁵⁵

Gramsci argued that “[t]he bourgeoisie poses itself as an organism in continuous movement, capable of absorbing the entire society, assimilating it to its own cultural and moral level.”⁵⁶ Institutions like museums enable the bourgeois ruling classes to “construct an organic passage” from the other classes into their own, by providing a forum in which the citizenry is represented to itself and assimilates the knowledge and values that prepare it for incorporation into the processes of the state. For Gramsci, the bourgeois state “must be conceived of as an ‘educator’, in as much as it tends precisely to create a new type or level of civilization.”⁵⁷ By drawing attention to the respects in which the museum involves a rhetorical incorporation of the people within the processes of power, it dilutes Foucaultian-inspired interpretations of museums as strictly instruments of discipline deployed by society’s hegemonic powers.

The climate of social reform that prevailed throughout much of the nineteenth century produced a set of influential individuals with a strong belief in the civilizing influence of museums, some with the means to establish their own institutions. Henry Cole, the first director of the South Kensington Museum (later known as the Victoria and Albert), was an ardent advocate of the role museums should play in the formation of a rational public culture. The social reform movement also produced the first generation of American philanthropists who, over the course of the nineteenth century, founded many of the new world's great museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the American Museum of Natural History, and the Art Institute of Chicago. In the 1840s, James Smithson bequeathed his resources to the American government to establish an institution dedicated to the increase and diffusion of knowledge. Robert Dale Owen, the author of the congressional bill to establish the Smithsonian Institution, was passionate about the museum's potential for broad-based social reform:

To effect permanent good in such a world, we must reach the minds and hearts of the masses; we must diffuse knowledge among men; we must not deal it out to scholars and students alone, but even to Tom, Dick and Harry.⁵⁸

Duncan sees a broader museum culture at work: "Through most of the nineteenth century, an international museum culture remained firmly committed to the idea that the first responsibility of a public art museum is to enlighten and improve its visitors morally, socially and politically."⁵⁹

Bennett discusses the role of exhibitions organized by voluntary organizations such as the Mechanics Institute in pioneering a set of pedagogic relations that the national public museums of Great Britain would later inherit. Going so far as to print and distribute instruction booklets to the working classes, “they sought to tutor their visitors on the modes of deportment required if they were to be admitted.”⁶⁰

The Great Exhibition of 1851 dramatically catalyzed support for the social reform arguments in favour of public access to museums. Although it stratified its publics by providing different days for different classes of visitors regulated by varying the prices of admission, its overwhelming popularity with the masses proved a major spur to the development of open door policies in British museums. Not only did it attract over six million viewers, it vastly stimulated attendance at London’s main historic sites and museums.⁶¹

The South Kensington Museum was officially dedicated to serving an extended and undifferentiated public, with opening hours and admissions policies designed to maximize its accessibility to the working classes. Its success, both in attracting the masses and in demonstrating that they could be admitted to the temples of high culture without wreaking havoc, catalyzed support for a British museum policy that fully embraced the museum as an instrument of public education.⁶² Following this precedent, even the British Museum relented and, in 1883, embarked on a programme of electrification to facilitate evening openings.

The development of modern forms of government, Foucault argues, is traced in the emergence of new technologies that aim at regulating the conduct of individuals and

populations. The bourgeois state required not merely that the populace be governable but that it assent to its governance, thereby creating a need to enlist active popular support for the values and objectives enshrined in the state. Disciplinary technologies survey, classify, and control time, space, bodies, and things. As the subject is surveyed, classified, and exposed to examination, he or she becomes his or her own self-regulator.⁶³ The education of the citizenry through museums emerged as a new form of population management, targeted at the collective good of the state rather than for the benefit of individual knowledge.

In theorizing the role of museums as social institutions, neo-Marxism considers the institutionally or informally organized production and reproduction of sense, meaning, and consciousness. Marx's state is characterized as a repressive regime serving the interests of power in society. In the broadest terms, the political class struggle revolves around the state and the seizure and conservation of state power by a certain class, class alliance or class fraction. Power is embedded in what Marx called the conditions of production—the relationship of labour to capital and who controls when, why and under what conditions we work and how the fruits of our labour are apportioned. Naturally, the ultimate interest of power is retaining power, so the ultimate condition of production is to reproduce and perpetuate the conditions of production.

The reproduction of the conditions of production requires not only the reproduction of labour's skills but also of its submission to the rules of the established order. Under classical Marxist theory, which sprang from analysis of nineteenth century industrial capitalism, the conditions of production appeared sufficiently simple, codified and

static to reproduce themselves. In an era of clear social stratification, a wide social and cultural gulf separated the bourgeoisie from the proletariat, who were denied access to education, leisure and virtually all but the necessities of life. However, with contemporary capitalism's demand for an increasingly diversified and specialized labour force, the reproduction of the skills of labour power hinges on the capitalist education system.

Althusser describes the implication of social institutions in the reproduction of the conditions of production. He identifies major social institutions as "Ideological State Apparatuses" [I will refer to them hereafter as "ISAs"] and distinguishes them from the state apparatus as a loosely bound set of public and private organizations that contribute to the reproduction of the conditions of production through ideology and the dissemination of knowledge. Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence. Above all, it is the relations of our conditions that are represented to us via ideology. Althusser identified religious, educational, family, legal, political, trade union, communications and cultural organizations as ISAs. He contends that "no class can hold State power over a long period without at the same time exercising its hegemony over and in the State Ideological Apparatuses."⁶⁴

Pre-capitalism's dominant ISA was the church, whereas today's dominant ISA are the educational and family structures. But all ISAs contribute to the same result.

Therefore, museums, as cultural institutions, may be seen as equally involved in the reproduction of the conditions of production. Cultural apparatuses cram citizens with

doses of nationalism, chauvinism, liberalism, economism, and moralism, while dressing up their ideology as natural, objective, or in the interests of human progress: “The mechanisms which produce this vital result for the capitalist regime are naturally covered up and concealed by a universally-reigning ideology of the school [or museum] which represents these institutions as neutral environments, purged of ideology...”⁶⁵

Burcaw contends that, whenever a museum is owned or managed by the central government, it is more likely to present that government’s official point of view. His twentieth-century examples illustrate the museum’s continued potential as a mediating institution for the hegemonic interests of the state: “The Soviet government founded 542 museums between 1921 and 1936 to re-teach history according to Marxist doctrine. Germany created over 2000 regional museums (*Heimatmussen*) between the two world wars. Their purpose was to restore national pride.”⁶⁶

This evolution in the museum discourse on education is in part a function of the gradual democratization of the museum institution. It also dovetails with the growing role of governments as brokers of increasingly diverse communities within the nation-state, in an era where sovereign legislative powers have gradually been constrained by human rights legislation and a growing interest in multilateral power regimes.

Into the Heart of the Modern Museum

The broader context in which the modern museum is situated has not remained static, and, as social relations have evolved, external influences have also shaped the discourse on museums' role and function. The last half of the twentieth century witnessed a radical and accelerated shift in social relations brought about by intensive political and academic advocacy for the equality of women, as well as racial and sexual minorities. The legacy of these movements is a public less deferential to traditional authority and more critical of the uses and abuses of institutional power.⁶⁷ In this new context, the entrenched practices of the modern museum more frequently generate either public resistance or public apathy, and raise serious questions about the continued relevance of the modern museum.

The story of the ill-fated *Into the Heart of Africa* exhibit, mounted in 1989 at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), provides the context to describe the structure, function, and ideology of the modern museum model. The growing importance of the education functions in museums, the professionalization of museum staff (particularly educators), and broader social shifts in the conceptualization of knowledge and power in society have led to the collapse of the modern museum as a viable institutional model.

*Case Study: “Into the Heart of Africa”*⁶⁸

At a museum conference in 1987, Jeanne Cannizzo hears a rumour that senior administrators at one of Canada’s most prestigious museums, the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, are considering a display of some of the artifacts in their extensive ethnography collection. Cannizzo, a specialist in the anthropology of art, has recently completed extensive fieldwork in Sierra Leone. She approaches the museum with a proposal to curate an exhibit of African artifacts that will highlight both their anthropological and their aesthetic appeal.

The ROM hires her as a guest curator shortly thereafter. Cannizzo begins her research and, with the support of the ROM’s exhibition and education staff, establishes the exhibition’s content. By focusing on the art of Central and West Africa, she will be able to make available to the public 375 artifacts that have been part of the ROM collection for over one hundred years, but in storage and only accessible to scholars. Most of the artifacts have come from Canadian military and missionary personnel who were sent to Africa to assist Britain in its colonial efforts in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Cannizzo realizes the potential these objects have to offer the public new insights into Canada’s role in African colonialism. While she feels that most people will be horrified to learn about Canadian participation in this history and the terrible circumstances under which these objects were collected, she believes the most positive response to this shameful legacy lies in the realm of public education.

The exhibit is called *Into the Heart of Africa* and is comprised of four sections. The first three sections of the exhibit—“The Imperial,” “The Military,” and “The

Missionary”— highlight the art brought back by these colonial players, and the fourth section deals with the many facets of African life. The section on missionary campaigns focuses on David Livingstone, the colonial hero whose romanticized and glorified efforts inspired waves of Christians to follow in his footsteps. It includes a lantern slide show called “In Livingstone’s Footsteps.” Cannizzo personally does not subscribe to a Christian belief structure, but she knows that this material will provide viewers with the context of what missionaries thought they were doing in Africa.

In June 1989, the ROM’s publication department gears up to promote *Into the Heart of Africa*, both to the general public and to teachers in metropolitan Toronto. Early in the month, the museum publicly announces the project and a consultant is hired to handle publicity and marketing for the exhibit. A promotional brochure is developed with text that recalls the Livingstone portion of the exhibit, perhaps because leading with a well-known historical figure seems the most promising way to grab and hold the attention of prospective visitors. It is also perhaps the least threatening way into the exhibit content, which is ultimately complex and somewhat disturbing.

Following standard practice in preparation for the launch of a major exhibition, the ROM team identifies target audiences and special interest groups. They assume that Toronto’s Afro-Canadian community will be interested, but realize that the museum has no history of communication with or service to this constituency, and no reliable lines into the community through its donors or its membership base. They decide to host a reception near the end of June for the Afro-Canadian community. Meanwhile, the

promotional brochure is approved for distribution and copies start making their way to the public.

Within days of the brochure's release, the Toronto Board of Education is in contact with the ROM—a teacher has lodged a complaint about the brochure and the board's advisor on Race Relations and Multiculturalism is taking it seriously. Local school groups are not only a target audience for this exhibit, but perhaps the ROM's most important constituency overall. The museum moves quickly to convene a meeting of the heads of its exhibition and education departments, the marketing consultant and Cannizzo with the teacher-complainant. The teacher's objections concern the brochure's passages about Livingstone, which she reads as a celebration of the imperial age and a stereotyping of the European-African relationship. It surfaces in the meeting that apparently the teacher is not alone in this interpretation of the brochure.

With the date of the ROM's reception for the Afro-Canadian community fast approaching, the museum decides to assemble two focus groups in conjunction with the event to determine exactly how widespread negative reaction to the brochure may be. On June 28th the ROM's approximately fifty guests are received in the well-appointed member's lounge. In this semi-formal setting, Cannizzo and a senior member of the museum's exhibition department address the crowd, explaining the intentions and the content of the exhibit under development. Uproar ensues—some members of the audience hurl accusations and rage incoherently; others want to know what they can do at this juncture to ensure that the ROM's exhibition will not be exploitative. The focus group sessions, held after the reception, go on much longer than anticipated.

In the wake of this exchange, the ROM's public relations department rewrites the brochure and reprints it at a reported cost of \$25,000. The museum also curtails a schedule of programmed events that would have involved the Afro-Canadian community during the run of the exhibit. According to the focus groups, the community would not appreciate the events since it had no prior involvement with the exhibit or the museum. Despite these measures, concerns continue to build within the Afro-Canadian community. Demonstrations in front of the museum are held and articles begin to appear in the press. Four other museums have been scheduled to host the exhibit after its run at the ROM. Eventually, all four cancel as a result of the controversy.

On November 16th, 1989, *Into the Heart of Africa* opens to the public amidst increasingly bad press. The issue radicalizes certain segments of the Afro-Canadian community and leads to heated student protests. Cannizzo, now teaching at the University of Toronto's Scarborough campus, is harassed and picketed in her classroom and receives calls at home threatening violence. Ultimately, fearing for her life, she quits her teaching post and leaves Canada for the UK.

Into the Heart of Africa provides a dramatic example of how the modern museum and its curatorial practices have fallen out of step with the pace of pluralistic society. In this case, the division of museum from community is exacerbated by the racial tensions stirred up by the subject matter of the exhibit. The matters of critical concern for this study revolve around the ways in which museums define and perform their functions of collection, conservation, education and communication production, and the implications

of this on the relationship of the institution and the community. However, none of the institutions of the bourgeois state—least of all museums—may be fully understood without reference to the crucible of colonialism in which they were forged.

In July 1798, after his military campaigns in Europe, Napoleon held a parade to escort the masterpieces that had been taken from collections found in the conquered Italian cities as they were being carried to the Louvre. It was a harbinger of the colonial era. The nineteenth century would be the century of mother countries, those decision-making centres from which vast colonial empires and their peoples were dominated. Other cultures were viewed as exotic, and their very strangeness invited examination, comparison, and collection. From this standpoint, conquests, empires, collections, and museography were closely interrelated.

The rapid growth in knowledge about the universe during the nineteenth century, supplied by new scientific disciplines, profoundly shaped the representational regime of the modern museum. Discoveries in the fields of geology and paleontology in the mid-nineteenth century produced a new, deep historical time. Darwin rebutted earlier notions of a polygenetic universe—in which nature is understood as continuously spinning out an infinite variety of wondrous creatures—with his theories of evolution. The resulting reorientation of anthropology produced new forms of classification and display, which museums rapidly deployed as narrative tools to reorganize their collections.

National identities were also consolidated during this period of intensive political and economic growth for European countries. In the early nineteenth century, the Louvre

had reconfigured its collection along the lines of chronology, artistic evolution, and national schools. The new methodological approach reflected Enlightenment rationality, but its “art-historical” arrangements demonstrated the developments made by each school and its principal masters over time. The irresistible lesson for emerging bourgeois states was that “progress in art could be taken as an indicator of how far a people or epoch evolved toward civilization in general.”⁶⁹ As the intellectual culture of eighteenth-century rationality was commandeered by nineteenth-century evolutionary historicism, “[t]he modern museum became a space of representation concerned to depict the development of peoples, states, and civilizations through time conceived as a progressive series of developmental stages.”⁷⁰

In the same vein, but on a supra-national level, this meta-narrative of the progress of civilizations organized the white citizenries of the Western bourgeois states into a new unity—the “civilized peoples.” This new unity was rhetorically positioned as the realization of the processes of evolution, its just beneficiaries, and its example to the “primitive peoples” of the earth.

In the museum context, then, colonial knowledge of “primitive peoples” was organized by a meta-narrative of progress. Bennett highlights the degree to which such peoples were reduced to instructional devices in the great project of teaching civilization to the Western popular classes: “Indeed, [they] were typically represented as the still-living examples of *the* earliest stage in human development, the point of transition between nature and culture, between ape and man, the missing link necessary to account for the transition between animal and human history.”⁷¹ These principles of classification were

most dramatically manifested in the display of human remains. Bennett observes “[in] eighteenth-century museums, such displays had placed the accent on anatomical peculiarities, viewed primarily as a testimony to the rich diversity of the chain of universal being. By the late nineteenth century, however, human remains were most typically displayed as parts of evolutionary series....”⁷²

An extension—or, rather, further perversion—of the logic of the meta-narrative of progress was the righteousness with which the imperialists claimed entitlement to the treasures of the peoples they conquered militarily. France’s explicit decision to levy war indemnities in the form of precious material things was rationalized by the Minister of Justice in a letter to Napoleon: “The reclamation of works of genius and their safekeeping in the land of Freedom would accelerate the development of Reason and human happiness.”⁷³ Museums, their collections burgeoning with foreign booty, were the eager handmaidens of imperialism, according to Schubert: “[They] presented their political masters as custodians of world culture, rescuers of what had been ignorantly neglected or even threatened with destruction in the countries of origin.”⁷⁴

To this day, the fallout from the association with colonial expansion haunts the great museums of the West, as is evident in the case study presented above, and in national movements for the repatriation of culturally sensitive objects. Remarkably, the “rescuers of world culture” argument—now presented as stewardship duties undertaken in the interests of the international community—has to this day remained a staple in debates about cultural restitution whenever the subject is raised. If there are any lingering moral qualms about the wholesale plunder of other nations’ heritage, they are

mitigated by the notion that precious art and artifacts have been rescued for posterity and are now in safer hands. In 1989, the director of the British Museum explained the institution's intention to retain the Benin bronzes: "our argument is...the sense of cultural responsibility, of holding material in trust for mankind throughout the foreseeable future...."⁷⁵

Perhaps nowhere is the modern museum more transparently an educational organ of the bourgeois state than in the context of colonial expansion and Western imperialism. As armies, missionaries, and governors gathered up the cultural treasures of the rest of the world, museums helped legitimize the wholesale plunder, becoming what Monpetit has called a "symbolic infrastructure of colonial power." Harnessing and shaping the emerging discourses of ethnology and anthropology, they represented their burgeoning collections of indigenous art and artifacts as the trajectory of civilization's progress, and its culmination in the contemporary imperial powers of Europe. As a result, "the study of other cultures was frequently little more than a form of mediation in the [imperial power's] self-affirmation process."⁷⁶ As Cameron describes it, "...the story of other civilizations and other cultures were presented around the high altar of the Mother Country's icons of power, symbols of superiority, and tokens of patronage.... The great encyclopaedic museums of Europe and America gathered up, by means fair or foul, the cultural treasures of the Other.... The museum became our equivalent of an ancient victory parade, displaying the spoils of war and conquest, humiliating the defeated with a show of the captured warrior-slaves."⁷⁷

The modern museum's colonial roots are further exposed in the uncomfortable curatorial approach to the representation of "primitive" art. Robert Goldwater, in his comparison of ethnographic and art museums, noted that ethnographical museums were beginning to view their material less and less from a purely technical and documentary point of view. Museums of ethnology, he observed:

...while not neglecting documentation and functional considerations have increasingly presented their objects (or at least some of them) as worthy of purely formal study. They have been willing to take the 'ethnographic' risk of making judgments which separate the finer objects from the more everyday ones in their permanent exhibits, and have also organized exhibitions to call attention to these special products of material culture as works of art.⁷⁸

In 1983, Levin notes the changes in museum content and applauds this expansion and diversification: "Not only Western art is considered worthy of exhibition in art and archaeology museums, but also Chinese, Japanese, Primitive, African, Mexican, and Oceanic Art."⁷⁹

The art/artifact distinction marks the divide between the disciplines of anthropology on the one hand and art history and criticism on the other. At the same time, Duncan argues, "the dichotomy has provided a rationale for putting Western and non-Western societies on a hierarchical scale, with the Western ones (plus a few far Eastern courtly cultures) on top as producers of art and non-Western ones below as producers of artifacts."⁸⁰ This scale is built on the assumption that only works of art are philosophically and spiritually rich enough to merit isolated aesthetic contemplation, while artifacts, as products of presumably less evolved societies, lack such richness.

According to the terms of this logic, it follows, that while art belongs in the more contemplative space of an art museum, artifacts are best seen in anthropological, ethnographic, or natural history collections where they may be studied as scientific specimens. Recently, “elevating” the culture of others to the status of art has challenged this hierarchical practice—hence, the introduction of “primitive art” wings into art museums or the creation of separate art museums specializing in such art.

Exposing the museum’s imperial/colonial roots raises questions about whether the institution is perhaps essentially ideologically flawed and beyond redemption. Is the museum simply an outdated vestige of imperialism, or is there something about the institution worth democratizing and reforming?

Evolution of Museum Education

The modern museum has always had a broadly educative function, but the specific conceptualization of the role education within the institution, and the techniques and resources marshaled in its name have evolved a great deal. Generally, museums have embraced an educational mandate. But museum theory and practice remains divided on the issue of how and whom museums ought to educate.

The traditional structure of the museum has hierarchically arranged departments, with curatorial departments such as research and collections at the top. Within this context, and as a means of perpetuating power relationships within it, education at museums has generally been quite narrowly defined as schooling. As Mary Ellen Herbert notes, however, “museum education is gradually becoming emancipated from a form of

reductionism that once kept it associated almost exclusively with groups of school children and school programs.”⁸¹

Traditionally, museum educators have found themselves isolated and marginalized within the museum community. Where education is narrowly defined as schooling, educators' activities are restricted to teaching particular audiences, rather than facilitating learning throughout the institution. This means they have traditionally been excluded from decision-making about the selection and presentation of artifacts or the development of exhibit text, for example. The scholar-curator has handled this crucial content development work. They cannot compete with the status conferred upon curators by virtue of their proximity and control of the source of the museum's prestige and power, the objects of the museum's collection. Lynette Harper reasonably suggests that the lower status of museum educators may also be associated with social patterns of gender bias, as the vast majority of museum education department staff and volunteers are female.⁸²

Still, many educators have been agents of change in their museums, helping to catalyze shifts in established institutional practices. In most cases, their effect has been limited to making changes within their own “domains” of school and public programming, or to assuming the role of “people's advocate” within interdisciplinary teams. Some have opted to advance to curatorial and management positions, leading one to wonder if they can continue to effect change from positions of power or if they have adjusted their assumptions and ideology, “co-opted” by existing patterns and structures.

In the course of the past fifteen years, there have been a number of efforts to develop the principles and methods of museum education. In 1991, under the auspices of the Canadian Society for the Study of Education, Colette Dufresne-Tassé of the University of Montreal organized a special interest group on education and museums for the purpose of encouraging research, publications, and dialogue between museologists and academic investigators in all areas relating to education and museums.

The professionalization of museum work over the course of the twentieth century has played its role in the discourses shaping power and practice within the institution. Standards for museum activities (from the storage, documentation and conservation of collections, to the publication or exhibition of scholarly work) have risen steadily since the 1970s. No longer are curators the museum's senior profession and main influence: many other professions now share the museum stage with curators. With the professionalization of museum educators, a growing emphasis on educational functions has thoroughly disrupted the organizational structure of the museum. Harper argues that both the functional compartmentalization of the modern museum, as well as its hierarchy of disciplines, are being challenged: "There has been an epidemic of re-organizations in major Canadian museums in the last decade, which I would suggest are inspired by humanist goals, an attempt to break the hegemony of disciplines and functions."⁸³ Her argument may be read to imply an inevitable awakening of museum professionals to the validity of the *vox populi* and the righteousness of popular education. However, we should not discount the impetus supplied by pragmatic considerations. In a time where considerable profit is being made in the heritage and

recreation industries, administrators may see popular education as the best course for growing museum audiences and conserving or enhancing funding.

Cannizzo reflects the modern museum in evolution, with the heightened importance of education and communication as a museum function:

I am an educator, a university professor so I am very interested in public education. It seems to me that the public functions of the museum are very important and to have a collection and have it only accessible to scholars is to not use it to its fullest potential.⁸⁴

In the twentieth century, a new educational mission has eclipsed the collection and conservation functions of museums. As education has assumed a greater role within the museum, the traditionally privileged curatorial departments of conservation and collection have been pitted against education departments, the former defending the sanctity of the object and the latter arguing the primacy of communication.

Knowledge Producers and Consumers

The image of the enlightened expert reaching down and “lifting up” the benighted masses is still at play in 1989, in Cannizzo’s own statements about her motivations behind *Into the Heart of Africa*. Despite the negative concerns of how and why the collection exists, she maintains that ultimately she designed the exhibition to “uplift the public.”⁸⁵ The model of education reflected in such assumptions—with museum as knowledge producer and the community as knowledge consumer—positions the institution as guardian and authority for historical values and aesthetic judgments. It reflects historical relations of power and privilege, and thus represents and attracts society’s conservative elements. As Duncan explains:

To control a museum means precisely to control the representation of a community and its highest values and truths. It is also the power to define the relative standing of individuals within that community. Those who are best prepared to perform its ritual—those who are most able to respond to its various cues—are also those whose identities (social, sexual, racial, etc.) the museum ritual most fully confirms.⁸⁶

Those who hold the power in museums still tend to define their role as to inspire and educate through the finest expressions of our culture. As long as the definition of this is broadened to include, for example, the work of women artists, and more thoughtful approaches are made to the interpretation of collections to make them accessible to a wider audience, the traditional mission is seen as remaining valid.

This has been challenged by a significant movement from within the profession over the past two decades seeking to “democratize” museums. Opening access to a redefined canon of high culture is seen as only half of this process; equal stress has been

placed on the need to redefine the subject matter of the museum to include the lives of the mass of the population, to reflect the ordinary as well as the extraordinary, popular culture alongside high culture.

As noted above, Cannizzo holds the educational function of museums in high regard and the ROM itself clearly takes its educational role very seriously. But *Into the Heart of Africa* represents the modern museum approach to content generation and meaning making in museums—that is, top-down and with the museum in firm control, transmitting authorized information to an uninformed public:

There is not a large number of Black Canadians who are specialists in art...Responsibility for the generation of theoretical issues, and the intellectual content of all galleries and exhibitions, rests with the museums and their staff...the generation of scholarly aspects of the exhibition must be done by experts... Scholarly issues should be left in the hands of scholars....⁸⁷

Curators whose democratic sensibilities are given free reign in their ideological approach to the exhibition's abstract story, may behave autocratically when faced with issues of sharing control of the content and project with the living communities whose identities and histories are bound up in the subject matter. These undemocratic impulses in museum practice only amplify the alienation of museum from community and perpetuate the image of arrogance and irrelevance often associated with museums in the popular media.

The Academic Challenge to the Modern Museum

For Schubert, the notion of the modern museum as a rational, objective, and neutral space has been one of Western society's most persistent and powerful myths: "It took nearly 200 years before the assumptions at the core of the museum's definition were subjected to close scrutiny."⁸⁸ But from the last half of the twentieth century, a radical academic critique of the modern museum as academic, elitist, and remote has arisen and gained ground amongst academics and museum professionals. This new type of cultural commentary, concerned with larger social issues such as the construction and deployment of knowledge, focussed on analyzing the museum's hidden effects.

According to Kevin Moore, museum studies largely only developed as a discipline from the 1970s onwards, and much of its early literature focused on practical rather than philosophical concerns. Fundamental questions concerning the nature and purpose of the museum did not receive much serious academic attention. However, over the past thirty years, museum studies programs at both undergraduate and graduate levels have been established by major universities—particularly in the United Kingdom, the USA, and Canada. A generation of politically radicalized graduates from these programs has now entered the museum profession, and this has put enormous pressure on museums to change. As a result, a compelling critique of traditional institutions has challenged established conceptions of museum organization and practice. The question "what is a museum?" is now explicitly or implicitly posed at virtually every museum conference or colloquium.

In his influential treatise, *Museums without Walls*, André Malraux identified some of the covert effects that the physical structure of the museum building exerts on its contents. Roberts notes that “Malraux was one of the first to observe how museums, in severing objects from their original contexts and functions and enclosing them in a new space with its own logic of organization, endow objects with values and meanings that may have nothing to do with their existence in their original context.”⁸⁹ Levin has shown how museums seem to borrow the architectural lexicon of either the classical temple or the commercial showroom. Duncan and Wallach develop these arguments with their iconographic analysis of the Museum of Modern Art based on the institution’s architecture, layout, and themes.

In the 1980s, a critique of the museum as an ideological construct emerged. Dubbed the “new museology,” a strong early strand of this critique was post-Marxist, with various contributions bearing the influences of Althusser (Meltzer, 1981), Gramsci (Bennett, 1988), and Foucault (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992). These heterogeneous works share a vision of the museum as a battleground between competing ideologies, but largely controlled by the dominant elite.

The philosophical critique is compelling, but how valuable has the new museology become in democratizing museum practice? Has it yielded substantial analysis and adequately shown how concrete alternatives to the modern museum might be implemented? Since the 1990s, we can point to innovations in museum practice that certainly reflect a new way of doing things. There is a growing awareness of the difficulties in establishing and justifying a “canon” of high culture, and a willingness to

broaden the definition of this to reflect the artistic expressions of “other” cultures, including popular culture.

What *Into the Heart of Africa* demonstrates is the extent to which social and literary criticism has complicated the museum’s core function of presenting its collections to the public. As Roberts has noted, “what were once considered to be relatively simple acts of display are now understood to be highly judgmental, deeply consequential endeavors.”⁹⁰ Cannizzo said that in creating the exhibit content she went “to the objects themselves for perspective,” which, through the ideological filter of scientific modernism, sounds objective, rational, and proper. Yet, what the detractors’ objections to the exhibit reveal, if not a conscious subscription to theories of knowledge as socially constructed, is an awareness that the facts—or in this case, the objects—simply do not speak for themselves. The way we look at them and the way we speak about them is an act of representation, and thus never simply objective. Cannizzo, in modern museum style, is focused on the content itself rather than the basis of her interpretation.

Conclusions

The fundamental assumptions on which the modern museum was based were neither analyzed nor queried throughout the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. However, as Schubert notes (and the response to *Into the Heart of Africa* demonstrates), the whole institutional model is being challenged today:

The museum is changing. In the past it was the place of absolute certainties, the fount of definitions, values and education...a place not of questions but of authoritative answers. Today, the museum is at the centre of a heated debate about its nature and methodology. At the most extreme, its very purpose is questioned....⁹¹

For *Into the Heart of Africa*, the central lesson here has less to do with the actual exhibit content than it does with the social construction of meaning. Who came up with the four thematic sections of the exhibit? What alternatives were considered and why were they rejected? How was it decided that a section on Livingstone would be included? The case points out the modern museum's inability or unwillingness to address the criteria of content generation and to open civil spaces in which all stakeholders can participate in the construction of meaning.

The reaction of the Afro-Canadian community to *Into the Heart of Africa* reflects an important shift in our collective understanding about the role that institutions play in the generation of knowledge and power. Cannizzo and the ROM officials relied on their professional credentials and the reputation of the museum as a leading centre of ethnographic research to legitimize the content of an exhibit developed in virtual isolation from the community. Members of the community felt they had a stake in the representation of their own history, and something to contribute to the process, and they clearly recognized the *pro forma* nature of the involvement the ROM was seeking from them at the eleventh hour:

...the exhibition was a *fait accompli*. The ROM was not really seeking assistance or wanting input. It seemed the ROM was not relying on any parties outside of their establishment for anything other than approval and support.⁹²

In pluralistic democracies, identity formation has become a visible form of political activity. It is no longer a matter of simply accommodating oneself to traditional values. Increasingly the traditional museum has been challenged as biased and reflecting

outdated dominant social values. If we follow Ivan Karp's assessment, we could argue, "that exotic objects displayed in museums are only there because of the history of Western imperialism and colonial appropriation, and that the only story such objects can tell us is the history of their status as trophies of imperial conquest."⁹³ For racial and cultural minorities and other traditionally marginalized groups, the freedom to be who you are and the expectation that you will see yourself represented and validated in official institutions are central issues. These issues were clearly at play in the response of Toronto's Afro-Canadian community to the ROM's exhibit.

Some suggested that the ROM's governance structure and operational policies might also reveal a degree of institutionalized racism.⁹⁴ Reform of trusteeship has been an issue particularly for American museums, where funding comes, in large measure, from private sources. Calls to democratize the Board of Trustees have been made amongst suspicion of privilege, social exclusiveness, and self-promotion that attaches itself to trusteeship in museums:

Museums are run by the rich white establishment for the rich white establishment. Protestors feel that the other ethnic groups...are not allowed to project their own identity through the museum exhibits and activities. All they can expect from their museums is a neatly packaged dose of traditional, white, masculine culture.⁹⁵

To some degree, the situation may be mitigated in Canada and European institutions, where funding of public museums generally comes from the government or city corporations and the trustees tend to be civil servants rather than rich art patrons. However, just like American social institutions, they have been shaped by the concerns of the dominant cultures and, certainly, Canadian museums are at a watershed in the

history of their development, facing the challenge of adapting to the social and cultural changes in Canadian society. This is illustrated by the fact that, while a number of Canada's most prestigious museums have been built on collections from the communities of First Nations, in most cases these collections have been treated as exotic materials with little connection to the living communities. According to David Goa, Director of the Provincial Museum in Alberta, the "...only viable course for museums to take in the Canadian context is that of developing serious working relationships with the diverse communities that make up Canadian society."⁹⁶

Beneath issues of cultural diversity and community responsibility lie some fundamental questions. The pressure is mounting for museums to acknowledge their political purpose, and to redefine it. Vocal and effective interest groups have begun to scrutinize museum activities. While ultra-conservatives are attacking art museums on issues of pornography, other socially conscious groups including anti-poverty activists, feminists, and environmentalists are actively criticizing the museum's hegemonic agenda.

Aboriginal peoples and ethnic groups have chosen to reclaim and recreate their history as a basis for cultural revitalization efforts. They have founded new kinds of museums, which are challenging the assumptions of museum collections and exhibition practices, and are changing the shape of the Canadian museum community.

Harper characterizes the modern museum's transformation as one from cultural temple to cultural forum. Although the process is slow, painful, and unfinished, "the battle has been joined both inside and outside its walls, and though some parts of the Temple are still standing, the public is gaining access to its inner sanctum."⁹⁷ By valuing and

listening to their visitors, some museums have begun to hear new questions: Do museums have the right and power to define history and culture? Should the museum take an advocacy role? How should museums respond to divergent community needs?

Harper draws an important distinction between community-oriented and community-based museum work and, in so doing, identifies the fatal flaw of *Into the Heart of Africa*. For Harper, community-oriented curatorial practice sees itself working *for* a community, basing itself on visitor studies and museum analysis of community needs rather than simply the academic interests of the curator or the dictates of the collection. However, community-based curatorial practice works *with* a community, sharing the power and decision-making with people outside the institution. It is clear that, while Cannizzo and the ROM set out with the admirable objectives of presenting a critical retrospective on Canadian colonial involvement in Africa and its relationship to museum collections, *Into the Heart of Africa* was developed exclusively by the museum and then marketed to the African-Canadian community of Toronto. The alternative of developing the exhibit in collaboration and partnership with the community was, apparently, not considered, and the results are a testimony to the failure of the modern museum practice.

It is a lesson that has not been lost on museum practitioners, more and more of whom recognize that, to remain vital social institutions, museums cannot continue to distance themselves from community. They are experimenting with new curatorial approaches, choosing to grapple with ideologies that do not match their own, and listening and responding to other, different voices concerned with social change.

New Communities, New Museums

The modern museum emerged out of prototypes that defined the institution as a restricted and privileged space and its development as a public institution within the bourgeois state did not divest it of its exclusivity. Like the other social institutions that developed alongside it—archives, libraries, and universities, the museum was imagined as a repository of expert and objective knowledge. Its success and longevity owes much to its historical ability to cleave knowledge producers from knowledge consumers and to operate from a position of rarely questioned cultural authority.

Increasingly, from the middle of the twentieth century onwards, the authority of established social institutions has been challenged. Demands for equal access and equal representation have raised fundamental questions about the modern museum's relationship with and responsibilities toward an increasingly diverse community. Should its first purpose be to advance research and knowledge? Or should it focus on generating awareness, instilling appreciation, stimulating a feeling of belonging, and fostering mutual understanding between cultures?

Monpetit notes with apparent disquiet that “there is a growing trend for [museums] to be regarded as places that are wide open to the community and accessible to everyone, public service institutions in a sense, with the function of meeting the needs and aspirations of their audiences and transmitting socially relevant messages.”⁹⁸ What is clear in all this uncertainty surrounding the future of the public museum is that, even

today, the institution remains a site for the continuous negotiation of the powers and parameters of social relations. Against the resistance of the modern museum, a “new museology” has evolved an alternate model that re-articulates traditional relations of power between the institution and the community. What is new in the new museology is not only the recognition of the educational potential of museums, but also the recognition of their potential to effect social change. Advocates of new museology believe that this desired social relevance can be achieved only through a radical opening of the museum. Amidst a burgeoning literature that touts the new museum's role in community empowerment and capacity building, however, few examples of the new museological practice have been reported or formally evaluated. This has prompted expressions of impatience with the predominantly academic focus of the new museology: “Perhaps the new museology has served its purpose...and it is now up to those museum workers who agree with this philosophy to develop an appropriate museum practice. This is not the job of academics, but of practitioners.”⁹⁹

In this chapter, I introduce a case study involving the deaccessioning of skeletal human remains from the Peterborough Centennial Museum and Archives and their repatriation to the Curve Lake First Nation. I refer to the case study as the “Peterborough Precedent,” a name associated with the event in the archaeological and museological communities during the 1990s.¹⁰⁰ The case study is certainly not intended to be an exploration of the difficult and multiplex relationship of museums and First Nations in Canada—a topic well beyond the scope of this thesis. Rather, my intention is to cite a specific and concrete example of museum practice that allows me to make a case for the potential continued vitality and relevance of the institution, based on an

acknowledgement of the social responsibility that goes along with the institution's cultural authority.

Case Study: The "Peterborough Precedent"

On the muggy, overcast morning of Thursday, May 30, 1991, a small solemn group gathered in the Curve Lake First Nation cemetery to witness the reburial of the skeletal remains of two individuals from the collection of the Peterborough Centennial Museum Archives (PCMA). The brief but poignant ceremony marked the formal transfer of remains from the museum's collection to the Curve Lake First Nation.

The museum's presence in Peterborough extends back to 1897 when the local historical society organized a display of artifacts in one of the city's private residences. The collection was later moved to the Carnegie Public Library on George Street where it survived several internal moves and library renovations. By the late 1950s, some of the artifacts had disappeared and others were being used as props for plays and children's programs in the library. In the 1960s, construction of a modern museum facility was undertaken as a centennial project within the community and, in 1967, the PCMA was officially opened.¹⁰¹ Over the years, the museum amassed a collection of over 22,000 items, including nineteenth and twentieth century textiles, military artifacts, an extensive fossil and mineral collection, tools, and architectural fragments. Amongst these, the museum had acquired the remains and associated grave goods of two individuals in its collection.

The remains and grave goods of the first individual came to the museum in 1960 when a Peterborough city employee discovered them during the installation of a parking

meter on Brock Street. After consultation with local police, the Royal Ontario Museum was contacted and sent a small archaeological team to complete the excavation. They found the complete skeletal remains of an adult male in his late forties. Buried with him were a number of finely chipped flint points, cache blades, antler flaking tools, and harpoon points. Based on the associated grave goods, the ROM concluded he was from the Point Peninsular Culture known to have lived in the Trent River System over 2,000 years ago.

The remains of the second individual were originally excavated in 1911 on private property in Smith Township near Peterborough, as part of the complete remains of four individuals. After examination by representatives of the University of Toronto and the Provincial Museum, the remains were exhibited for a number of years at the local Victoria Museum (an institution unrelated to the PCMA). What remained of the collection after years of neglect was further dispersed when the Victoria Museum closed in the early fifties, and in 1962 the skull of an adolescent female was donated to the PCMA.

In the 1960s, the PCMA incorporated the skeletal remains into an exhibit designed to replicate a Native burial site, where they stayed on public display for approximately twenty years. By the early 1980s, however, the exhibit was eliciting criticism on both conservational and educational grounds. The human remains were deteriorating and, according to former curator Ken Doherty, the exhibit no longer appeared to be an effective interpretive device: “Older children and adults focused solely on the gruesome connotations of the bones themselves and younger children were so

frightened by the exhibit that it was covered for primary school tour groups.”¹⁰² In 1983, the curator of the day ordered the exhibit disassembled and the skeletal human remains removed from the public display area of the museum.

In 1988, museum staff proposed that the human remains be removed from the PCMA's collection, and they received authorization from the Board of Museum Management to approach the Curve Lake First Nation, which was the nearest band in the area, to discuss repatriation of the remains. With no known precedents in Canada to guide them, museum staff and representatives from Curve Lake worked together to develop a meaningful and appropriate repatriation process.¹⁰³ Discussions were held over a period of nearly three years, and both the Band Council and the Board of Museum Management reviewed successive sets of recommendations until a process with which all felt comfortable was finally developed.

The Curve Lake Band Council formally approved the repatriation process on October 15, 1990, and official approval by the Board of Museum Management came on January 23, 1991. The skeletal remains and associated grave goods would be deaccessioned from the museum's collection, transferred to the custody of the band, and reburied at the cemetery in the Curve Lake First Nation territory. Both parties wanted to ensure that the transfer and reburial would be a respectful process, and it was agreed to limit media coverage of the event. To announce the repatriation, a press conference was held in conjunction with the signing ceremony involving the Mayor Sylvia Sutherland of Peterborough and Chief Mel Jacobs of Curve Lake First Nation. However, there was no media coverage of the reburial ceremony, and no open viewing of the skeletal

remains. In accordance with the agreement, the museum hired a professional photographer to document the process, and provided a copy of the record to the Curve Lake First Nation.

In preparation for reburial, the remains were placed inside birch bark containers. To ensure the proper orientation of the remains during the burial, a hawk feather was placed at the end of container with the male remains. The grave goods were placed in a rawhide pouch and set inside. An owl feather was placed at the end of the container with the female remains. The museum had prepared a small brass plaque inscribed with the date and location of the discoveries, museum accession numbers, bibliographic entries, and the date of re-interment. This plaque was placed in the container with the female remains. The containers were then closed and sealed with pine and spruce pitch.

Curve Lake had arranged the reburial ceremony, which combined both Christian and Native burial traditions. On the eve of the reburial, an informal Feast of the Living was held at the Curve Lake Community Centre. Chief Jacobs described the event:

So the Feast began, all formed a circle with four pipe carriers on their blankets leading. There was the smell of sweet grass and sage. The smoke cleansed the people and the food they offered. The pipe carriers spoke to grandfather, spoke of Mother Earth, hoping that the spirits understood it may not be exactly right but they would do the best they could. They spoke of the break in the travel of the spirits and that tomorrow they would again be on their way. The drum and singers sang an honour song. The four pipes were passed around the circle to young, to old, to white, to Indian, to men, to women in kinship and the being of one purpose. After the meals, a plate of food was prepared for the spirits to

take on their journey the next day. A social of singing ended the evening.¹⁰⁴

On the morning of the burial, a sweet grass ceremony was held at the museum to purify museum staff, the route to be taken, the burial containers, and the vehicle. To calm the spirits, sweet grass was burned in the vehicle during the trip along a pre-determined route from the museum to the cemetery. Upon arrival, the two containers were removed from the vehicle and placed in the arms of two women picked from the crowd. A procession led by pipe carriers and drums moved to the graveside.

At the graveside, an honour song was sung as the burial containers were lifted and placed into their final resting-place. The pipe carriers spoke and each dropped tobacco into the grave. All those in attendance shared fresh strawberries—the first fruit of spring and symbol of birth—and several strawberries were placed in the grave. The ceremony included a reading by a woman of the Medewewin, a song by a Medewewin pipe carrier, a Christian offering, a Christian hymn in Ojibway, and concluded with a Christian prayer led by one of the Curve Lake Elders.

Following the reburial ceremony, a white granite marker was placed on the site, its simple inscription capturing the intent of the repatriation process:

Borrowed from the past
Brock Street Site, December 6, 1960
Smith Township Site, August 8, 1911
Returned to Mother Earth
Curve Lake Site, May 30, 1991

The “Peterborough Precedent” raises two extraordinarily important sets of issues for museums and society. The first has to do with the general relationship of the museum to community, and their relative roles in the generation, validation, and stewardship of knowledge. The second deals more specifically with the ownership and representation of Aboriginal artifacts collected under the auspices of European colonialism. While this second set of issues is not the focus of this thesis, the relationship between museums and First Nations represents an important field of social and political history against and out of which new museological practices are emerging. It also sets the Peterborough repatriation in context, and highlights just how radical a museological act the PCMA performed a decade ago. For these reasons, a brief discussion of the colonial history that binds the modern museum to the First Nations of Canada is warranted here.

Museums and First Nations

We have seen how the modern museum played an important role in constructing a persuasive meta-narrative of progress that rationalized the colonial practices of the Western bourgeois states during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One of the assumptions of this conceptual framework was that, with the advances of human civilization, “primitive peoples” naturally would be overtaken by “civilized peoples” and would vanish. Thus, a great portion of existing collections were gathered at the turn of the century when museums and private collectors rushed to collect cultural materials from Aboriginal communities which, according to the social, scientific, and political philosophy of the time, were believed to be well on the way to extinction.

Gerald McMaster, artist and Curator of Contemporary Indian Art at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa describes how in this country Aboriginal artifacts were separated from their original contexts and functions, and made available for collection through the devastating government policy of “aggressive civilization.” In the name of assimilating Native peoples into Western society, the government introduced laws that sharply curtailed or banned many traditional cultural practices. With the enforced rapid shift to modernity, the objects associated with traditional practices-both both sacred and profane-were rendered obsolete, and lost their value amongst Native communities. Their original moorings severed “...massive quantities of inert tribal objects appeared, while traditional cultural practices and the languages of the object disappeared.”¹⁰⁵ The objects were, thus, easily commodified and recycled as artifacts, specimens, or art.

As we have seen, the curatorial practices of the modern museum were born of Enlightenment rationality, which privileges a dispassionate curatorial gaze to facilitate proper (read scientific) assessment and categorization of the object in view. However, this strictly rational approach poses problems when the object in question may have profound ritual or sacred meaning, especially if that meaning originates and operates in a non-Western cultural context. McMaster argues that a sacred object’s identity is invested through ritual practices, often based on rights, privileges, and position within the community to which the object belongs. Therefore, the “knowledge” produced by the most even-handed and accurate ethnographic analysis still leaves the object inert and divested of its meaning, since the meaning may only be derived from the object-in-practice within the community.

The detachment of objects from original contexts renders them vulnerable to conscription by new systems of meaning making at play in the museological environment. From the perspective of collection, curators, and other museum professionals consider the object's provenance, manufacture, and material condition, and tend to frame its meaning in aesthetic, historical, or anthropological terms. From the perspective of exhibition, curators and educators market objects as commodities for public consumption. Museum exhibitions aestheticize the objects giving them new status. From the perspective of conservation, conservators are entrusted to preserve the object for as long as possible, and, at all costs, although the artificial suspension of the object's organicity may also compromise the object's original identity.

The continued retention and display of First Nations sacred objects and human remains place the Western values of dissemination of knowledge and education before the beliefs and sensitivities of descendants or culturally affiliated groups. McMaster is firm on the legal and moral implications of such activities: "Removing sacred objects is not only a theft of property but...it is an act of desecration that violates deeply held religious beliefs that are essential to the spiritual well-being of Native Americans."¹⁰⁶ Doherty stresses the principle of respect underlying the museum's decision to repatriate-respect for Native culture, respect for Native burial practice, and respect for the deceased individuals themselves. He agrees that museum professionals have become desensitized in their dealings with human skeletal remains:

Too often, museum professionals have been desensitized in their dealings with native skeletal remains. While they may no longer regard them as curiosities, they still tend to view them simply as accessions, specimens, and

interpretive material. By doing so, they have lost sight of the values and emotions that they readily equate with their own dead-like dignity, compassion, and perhaps most importantly, respect.¹⁰⁷

It is helpful to understand the historical and political context in which the Peterborough repatriation project took place. The three years preceding the event witnessed a growing public awareness of issues around museum ownership and representation of First Nations artifacts. In 1988, in the lead up to the Winter Olympics, Calgary's Glenbow Museum presented a major exhibit entitled *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples*. The exhibit set off a storm of protest and became the focus of a land rights campaign by the Cree Indians of Lubicon Lake.

The Lubicon Cree originally opposed the exhibition on the basis of its sponsorship by Shell Canada Ltd., which was one of several oil companies involved in destructive drilling activities on land they claimed as their own. To draw attention to their land claim, they had been calling for a boycott of the Winter Olympics from as early as 1985. However, the Glenbow's presentation of the Shell-sponsored exhibit catalyzed their efforts and provided a focus that would garner significant media attention. Issues intrinsic to the exhibition of sacred Aboriginal objects, such as the open display of Ojibway masks intended to be seen and used only by certain people during certain times of year, came to light and gained nationwide news coverage as a result of the critical attention focused on the exhibit.

Lubicon Lake First Nation's boycott of the Glenbow Museum's exhibition was the impetus for bringing Aboriginal peoples and museums together in a series of national discussions. When the exhibition opened in Ottawa, Assembly of First Nations (AFN)

National Chief Georges Erasmus invited Dr. George MacDonald, Director of the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMA), to co-sponsor a symposium dealing with outstanding issues between museums and First Peoples. At the symposium, 150 participants sought to define the work required to forge a true partnership between museums and First Peoples. The symposium led to the establishment of a task force to provide a forum for ongoing discussions and develop an ethical framework and strategies for Aboriginal Nations to represent their history and culture in concert with cultural institutions.

Over the subsequent two years, task force members worked as three regional committees based on a traditional model proposed by a First Nations task force member. Over four thousand invitations to make submissions on the issues before the task force were distributed to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural, educational, political, and governmental organizations. Forty-seven submissions were received in response to the invitations.¹⁰⁸ The consultations demonstrated that museums and cultural institutions were well aware of the necessity and the value of working as equal partners with First Peoples. The task force's 1992 report recommended strategies for developing partnerships between First Peoples and museums, and offered an alternate way forward to that which was being taken in the United States in response to similar issues.

The Canadian task force produced a strong consensus that "partnerships should be guided by moral, ethical, and professional principles and not limited to areas of rights and interests specified by law."¹⁰⁹ Task force members studied the *Native American*

Grave Protection and Repatriation Act, which had been passed in the United States in 1990. However, the task force agreed that, in the face of varying concepts of ownership, a case-by-case collaborative approach to resolving repatriation based on moral and ethical criteria would work better than a strictly legalistic approach. While not ruling out the possibility of the creation of legislation in the future, it was agreed that it would be preferable to encourage museums and Aboriginal peoples to work collaboratively to resolve issues concerning the management, care, and custody of cultural objects.

Task Force members strongly agreed that human remains and illegally obtained objects, along with certain non-skeletal burial materials and other sacred objects, should be returned to appropriate First Nations. A selection of other objects considered to be of special significance to cultural patrimony was also identified as eligible for repatriation by originating communities. It was agreed that First Nations communities should be able to demonstrate direct prior cultural connection and ownership with regard to collections in question, and that there should be Aboriginal involvement in determining who is the appropriate person or group to receive any repatriated material.

The task force articulated several guidelines for repatriating Aboriginal human remains, making it clear that “the retention of Aboriginal human remains for prolonged periods against the expressed wishes of First Peoples is not acceptable.”¹¹⁰ The task force recommended that the treatment of ancient remains and associated burial objects, or those that cannot be affiliated with a named First People be decided through discussion and negotiation with an advisory committee of First Peoples. The First People may

work with scientific interests for a mutually agreed upon time period and may have the remains re-interred in a manner consistent with local traditional practices. Human remains that may be affiliated with a named First People must be reported to that Nation, community, clan, tribe, or family.

The consultative process undertaken by the task force stimulated discussion of the experiences of individual museums that had been involved in repatriation negotiations during the 1980s or early 1990s, though little publicity had been given to these cases at the time. The Curve Lake First Nations and the Peterborough Centennial Museum project to rebury skeletal remains and artifacts from the PCMA collection came to the attention of the task force in 1991 and was held up as a model of collaboration in the spirit of the guidelines under development.

Since the publication of the task force's report, meaningful progress has continued to be made without the need for government legislation. For example, the Glenbow Museum developed a board-approved policy that recognizes the importance of religious and ceremonial objects to the First Nations and confirms that display of such material requires the support of appropriate Native groups. The policy also allows the museum to lend religious objects in its collection to the First Nations for ceremonial use. A sacred Medicine Pipe Bundle is on loan to members of the Blood Nation, who have, in turn, encouraged Glenbow staff to attend and participate in ceremonies so that they may understand Blood culture more fully.

Over the past ten years, many other repatriation initiatives—especially of skeletal remains—have been undertaken by other museums in Canada and around the world,

demonstrating the global impact of this discourse between Aboriginal peoples and modern museums. The Glasgow Museums and Galleries network recently returned a collection of human remains to a group of Aborigines in Australia. The remains had been stolen from graves by collectors in the late nineteenth century and had been part of a display about evolution in the Natural History Section of the museum. According to the Museums Director, Julian Spalding, the handing over ceremony was very moving: “The Aborigines knew who the dead people were, and said a ‘welcome home’ prayer in my office. They couldn’t say a burial prayer because these remains had already been buried. They went away carrying the bones in cardboard boxes.”¹¹¹ In support of his museum’s deaccessioning of the remains, Spalding insists that museums can be a creative force in society, and can help to create the society we want to live in.

Moira Simpson has argued that the issues affecting relationships between museums and indigenous peoples are very similar to those that influence museums and other ethnic groups.¹¹² The needs of ethnically diverse audiences bring new issues into play—issues concerning divergent perspectives, the authority of a dominant group not representative of those portrayed. By extension, many of these questions associated with museum representation and cultural diversity are relevant to other cultural groups, identifiable by class, gender, disability and so on. Essentially, given the conscious plurality that is contemporary society, the relationship of museum to community is something that affects us all.

New Communities, New Museums

Any model of museum practice must grapple with the definition and relationship of three fundamental elements: the “object,” the “visitor,” and the “space and means” in which the two are brought together. The modern museum has been characterized as a “bank of things” laid aside in a building for that purpose. It privileges the functions of collection and conservation over education and communication and focuses its curatorial practice on recording as completely as possible the available inventory of artifacts. In as much as it shares its collection with the public, it tends to abstain from interpretation and rely on the object to speak for itself.

With the failure of the modern museum to respond to the needs of an increasingly pluralistic society, manifest in the community’s response to *Into the Heart of Africa*, new ways of imagining these elements and their relationships have arisen. Certain authors have attempted to systematize and define a set of operating principles for the “new museum,” and have attempted to describe what the structure, approach, and tasks of the institution should be, if it is to remain a viable and relevant in society.¹¹³ While these include the familiar activities of collection, conservation, research, exhibition, and education, each of these roles is very differently interpreted within the ideological framework of the new museology.

One of the great questions of contemporary curatorial practice has to do with the degree to which the object itself is intrinsic to and definitional of the museum. On the surface of things, it may seem obvious to some that “the most important and unique characteristic of a museum exhibition is that it facilitates an encounter between visitor

and three-dimensional object.”¹¹⁴ However, as I will argue here, some of the critical assumptions of the modern museum are in question, due to the influence of social history in the shaping of museological theory and young museum professionals, as well as the advance of innovative and community-based curatorial practices like those reflected in the PCMA's repatriation project.

Kevin Moore, former curator of a local authority museum in Britain and lecturer in the University of Leicester's Department of Museum Studies, insists that museums are not museums if they are not centrally about material culture, and the “collecting, documenting, preserving, exhibiting and interpreting material evidence and associated information.”¹¹⁵ But, as Hugues de Varine indicates, the new museum accords equal importance to the non-material manifestations of a given heritage—all knowledge, all historical and social perceptions, and all testimony become subjects and objects of conservation:

The collection is composed of everything this territory has and everything that belongs to its inhabitants, both real and personal property, material or non-material goods. This is a living heritage, constantly changing and constantly being created, belonging essentially to individuals, families, small collectives, which a motivation and research team can use as needed for all kinds of actions.¹¹⁶

This expansion of perspective beyond the scope of the three-dimensional object requires an interdisciplinary approach that puts the accent on the relationships between humankind and its environment, and has implications for every aspect of museum work, from the collection of artifacts to the development of exhibits.

If what is of museological interest to the community surpasses the “bank of things” in the museum's vaults and galleries with its inclusion of non-material culture, a corollary for the new museology is that objects may virtually and scientifically belong to the museum collection without having to give up their physical location or their usefulness. Ideally, the inventoried heritage is available to everyone and the museum holds only a limited number of objects, which in some way are deemed representative, significant, aesthetically interesting, rare or delicate, are acquired and conserved. If possible, artifacts are left *in situ* and kept in their original context. As de Varine explains:

The acquisition of fragments of this heritage is not programmed and takes place in effect only in the case of abandonment, risk of alienation prejudicial to the community, voluntary gift or definitive use for another purpose. It is only a last resort and the collection proper of the museum, in the institutional sense, cannot be an end in itself.¹¹⁷

In the new museum, all collection and conservation activities proceed from the requirements of community. Most importantly, the identification of an area's cultural heritage is not determined in the first place by scholars, as is the case in traditional museums, but rather it is the population of a given region whose collective memory determines the heritage to be preserved. As Rivard notes in this community-based museology, what defines heritage is not the imprimatur of the curator, but “that which is alive today in human memory, significant, and useful in the present.”¹¹⁸

Just as collection and conservation refer to the needs of a given population, the starting points for communication and education are the concrete social conditions, interests, and requirements of the community. Moore argues that the functions of collection,

documentation, and preservation serve a greater purpose—they enable material culture to be used in a communication process by and with the public, both in the present and in the future. For him, communication in museums is not simply about entertainment, “it is about education, in its very broadest, least didactic, sense.”¹⁹ It is clear, however, that whatever is communicated by the museum context is communicated through material culture, and wherever the discourse may go, it begins and ends with reference to the object. In contrast, a new museological approach to communication and education functions fixes the community as its touchstone.

At the level of theory, the principles of new museology outlined above present a clear counterpoint to traditional curatorship. Putting the theories into practice must certainly involve concessions, compromises, and half-measures to accommodate the complexities of project management and human interaction involved in assembling, caring for and communicating about a collection. However dilute the *de facto* new museology might be in relation to its principles, its community orientation still promises to breathe new life into the museum institution and lend its work new relevance. We can identify some of the potential benefits for both museums and communities in the case of the Peterborough repatriation project.

Certainly, the PCMA and the Curve Lake First Nation collaboration and its aftermath may be framed as a sort of extension of curatorial power to the community. The repatriation initiative did originate in the PCMA curator’s office and presumably required discussion and negotiation within the museum’s municipal governance structures before agreement was reached on an initial approach. However, the project

really began with the invitation to open discussions between the museum and the Curve Lake First Nation, and it is clear that the entire repatriation project was the result of respectful joint planning over a three-year period, reflecting a very significant sharing of curatorial powers and prerogatives.

Although lauded by the task force examining museum and First Nations partnerships, the “Peterborough Precedent” was controversial and elicited apocalyptic hand-wringing from certain members of the archaeological and museum communities, who equated it with book burning and forecast an avalanche of repatriations that would cripple archaeological research in Canada. The deaccessioning of human remains, or any culturally sensitive materials, remains a difficult and hotly disputed matter for Western museums.

According to Doherty, the PCMA repatriation resulted in certain attitudinal shifts amongst museum staff, in line with the new museology's understanding of community-oriented collection and conservation:

Through this process museum staff now have a different view of the nature of their responsibilities for their collection. Stewardship does not necessarily mean ownership. The museum did not own those remains. They were in its care. Through this transaction, the museum transferred its responsibility for that care to the Curve Lake First Nation.¹²⁰

The repatriation agreement allowed the museum to take casts of the deaccessioned grave goods for future display, and with the assistance of a local archaeologist, all of the artifacts were duplicated. Although the agreement also permitted the PCMA to take a sample of the remains for radio carbon dating, museum staff decided this would not

be necessary. Since 1991, PCMA has deaccessioned several other items and returned them to the Curve Lake First Nation.

If the modern museum's identity and *raison d'être* is challenged by a redefinition of the collection that introduces the consideration of non-material heritage, its predominantly object-oriented approach is further questioned by the increasing importance of “theme,” “story,” and “experience” in the new museology. Monpetit observes that “the contemporary museum is evolving; it is no longer merely a place where objects are kept, it is displaying an increasing tendency to become transformed into a place where various events, aimed at specific target audiences, are programmed.”¹²¹ For de Varine, the work of the new museum must be theme-centered and the themes addressed must arise from the “collective memory” and from contemporary needs of the community.

The unquestioned belief in the primacy of the object to the work of the museum has been shaken as a new generation of curators—graduates of the new museums studies programs—has applied an understanding of social history in the conceptualization and development of complex exhibits. The results are often academically breathtaking, but the academic approach has led to accusations of “books on walls” and the marginalization of collections.

If words are eclipsing objects in conveying the museum's messages to the public, some wonder whether museums are adding any value to society that might not be better achieved through alternate institutions, such as universities or book publishers. As Weil puts it, museums that stress general educational objectives as their principal outcome may ultimately “leave themselves vulnerable to the claims of more traditional

educational institutions that these latter could, with only a little inexpensive tinkering, deliver a comparable value at a fraction of the cost.”¹²² Moore claims that the very essence of museums is being denied by a generation of young curators who are transforming them from “object-centred” to “story-centred” institutions. In his view, curators need to recognize that certain subjects cannot be tackled through exhibitions, and that displays are not an effective way of telling stories or discussing the issues of social history compared with, for example, publications.

However, such objections do not withstand arguments that put relevance to and engagement of the community over the sanctity of the object and the scientific methods of traditional curatorial practice. Objects do not speak for themselves—they demand interpretation, and for non-expert audiences simple presentation labels are insufficient. The museum should not simply limit itself to presentation of material culture but should also provide context, and this is about the visitor as much as it is about the object. As Roberts observes: “visitors’ interest and attention is determined not by an object’s inherent appeal but its relevance to their own framework of knowledge and experience.”¹²³

Within the sphere of First Nations and museums, Claudia Notzke has noted that the Western conceptual approach to heritage is not shared by everyone: “While many Aboriginal people accept the essentially Western idea that tradition and heritage are manifest in material objects, their primary focus is on what the object represents, not the object itself.”¹²⁴ It seems there is general agreement amongst museum professionals that the modern museum’s strictly scientific treatment of the object does not adequately

engage the full range of human intelligences, the multiple languages and symbol systems available for ordering experience and making sense of the lived world.

A cornerstone of the new museology, and the social theory upon which it was founded, is a heightened “institutional consciousness,” an acknowledgement the museum's role in making meaning and structuring social relations. Contemporary museological discourse developed as a product of the new discipline of museum studies, which Western universities began adding to their programmes of studies in the 1970s. By the 1980s, a theoretically informed critique of the modern museum was available, drawing on the influences of Althusser, Gramsci, Habermas, and Foucault. Hooper-Greenhill's discussion of the “disciplinary museum,” for example, is explicitly an elaboration of Foucaultian thought. For Hooper-Greenhill, the museum is read as a site for the deployment of the bourgeois state's new governing technologies of individuation and surveillance. The legacy of this sort of discourse is an acute sense of the institution's social agency and cultural authority. From this position, the possibilities of a community-based museology are argued with institutional action and research that satisfies social requirements, that is continually adapted to a population and its territory, and that contributes to individual and social development.

René Rivard argues that, if a museum really wants to initiate relevant work within the context of a given population, it must orient itself to the local conditions and to the specific interests and needs of that population. The new museum cannot operate in isolation or by some esoteric set of standards and guidelines. Rather, it must open itself outward to society in order to have an effect on the public. A basic “principle of

territoriality” is at play within this concept of museums, binding the institution to its locality and community. The new museum relates to a clearly demarcated territory and its population. These are defined by cultural and natural boundaries (for example, a city, a neighborhood, a cultural and geographical region), rather than tied to given administrative divisions.¹²⁵

If the modern museum projects an air of permanence and transcendence, the new museum strives to maintain a low degree of institutionalization in order to preserve its experimental character and maintain the greatest possible openness to the constantly changing reality of people's lives. According to de Varine, the new museum also privileges a decentralized spatial structure that extends the institution into the community itself: “Ideally, neither the spatial nor the organizational structure is fixed.”¹²⁶ Instead of constraining its activities within the “four walls” of the building, it seeks opportunities to offer programming to neglected publics in non-museum environments, such as factories or hospitals.

Even the organizational and governing structures envisioned for the new museum are geared to the greatest possible inclusion and participation of the community, with the museum accountable to an association of citizens who approve the museum's programming. The community chooses representatives for the board of directors at an annual general assembly, and the board advises museum personnel between general meetings. The population is offered further possibilities for active participation by joining various working groups.¹²⁷

We can see some of this in the evolution of the PCMA's governance structures following the repatriation illustrate that there is an appetite for community-based management of cultural and heritage resources. Up until 1991, the institution fell under the Museums and Archives Division of Peterborough's Community Services Department and was governed by a sub-committee of Peterborough's city council. With the success of the repatriation project and subsequent related initiatives involving extensive consultation and collaboration with all four local bands in the community, the museum convinced the city to revise its governance structures in a way that would allow the PCMA to extend its community-based approach serves as a community resource for all matters relating to culture and heritage.

The PCMA is now managed as the lead component of the Culture and Heritage Division of the city's Community Services Department. A Culture and Heritage Board, consisting of local community members at large, two aldermanic appointees, and representatives from local historical and arts organizations, governs the division. While city council maintains a Museum and Archives sub-committee, it relies on the Culture and Heritage Board to manage the PCMA and to advise the council on cultural and heritage matters. This innovative structure is now being used as a model for other municipalities in Ontario.

Beyond collection and conservation and the other tasks shared with traditional museums, the new museum integrates continuing education and evaluation in its core functions. For citizens to be actors in the various spheres of museum work, the new museum uses museum-specific continuing education to prepare the population to

perform museum tasks to which they are entitled and to do them independently. The new museum also embraces its evaluative function, the continuing process of calling itself into question and scrutinizing its work. This is done to ensure that the museum will constantly adapt itself to changing conditions and needs of the population and is undertaken as part of the continuing dialogue with the community rather than as a marketing exercise.

Traditional museology grounds its authority on the principles of scientific method, objectivity and neutrality, and its defenders vehemently oppose the “politicization” of the museum. However, the new museology discloses that museums are intrinsically political institutions and objective neutrality is impossible:

Museums have never been nor can they be neutral spaces. They can become public arenas, settings for the examining of civil society, in which the histories and creations of particular groups are represented for debate and reflection.¹²⁸

Museums, therefore, cannot escape politics; even if they claim to eschew a political stance, they inherently have one in supporting the status quo. Widening and developing the political issues that museums engage with has simply revealed this truth.

But which political stance should museums take on such issues, if we accept that they have no choice but to engage in them? Young curators seek to push forward a radical agenda, but how viable is this if it is not shared, by either the community the museum serves, or, perhaps even more importantly, the governing body which funds the museum? If we accept that the museum is an appropriate political battleground, those of a radical perspective must accept that there will be many defeats, at a time of rising

reaction in the United States in particular. A critical dimension of this institutional consciousness is an awareness of the power of authorship. Extending the principles of community-based museology to epistemological considerations that shape curatorial practice, many museum professionals are acknowledging that the notions of received authority of external knowledge are in tension with the view that human knowledge is a human construction.

We have seen how the “civilizing rituals” of the modern museum reflect and perpetuate social relations. In the case studies selected for discussion here we have relied on the legacy of colonialism to highlight the degree to which inequities are kept alive through traditional curatorial practice, but who is seen to be authorized to produce knowledge and by what means are issues that exceed the bounds of race. Greene has eloquently drawn the connection between the consciousness of authorship and the consciousness of freedom:

To be aware of authorship is to be aware of situationality and of the relation between the ways in which one interprets one's situation and the possibilities of action and of choice. This means that one's reality, rather than being fixed and predefined, is a perpetual emergent, becoming increasingly multiplex, as more perspectives are taken, more texts are opened, and more friendships are made.¹²⁹

Monpetit concludes that we must alter the way museums work in order to ensure that they are not operating in a vacuum and talking to themselves, to ensure that from the earliest stages in the design of all activities, “the user is implicitly involved in the decision-making process on the supply side.”¹³⁰

The modern museum's image of its visitor is a Victorian stereotype and reflects the institution's *Wunderkammer* and princely gallery origins. The visitor is autonomous and educated, or educable—perhaps an amateur in the subject matter, equipped with sufficient academic context to make sense of the display of objects he will encounter. Most importantly, he has an appetite for “higher order” thinking and the ability to conceptualize abstractions. This rational man is self-directed and responsible, relying on his cognition for the resolution of moral dilemmas, and the mastery of interpersonal rules. However, as Greene notes, “the problem with this highly cognitive focus...has to do with whether or not reasoning is enough when it comes to acting in a resistant world, or opening fields of possibilities among which people may choose to choose.”¹³¹ She points out that, when engagement with subject matter is strictly cognitive, there is little evidence that the participants take such issues personally or apply their knowledge to situations in the “real world.”

According to Greene, people need the opportunity to test out new forms of social order, and only then to reason about their moral implications. The point of cognitive development is not to gain an increasingly complete grasp of abstract principles. It is to interpret from as many vantage points as possible lived experience, the ways there are of being in the world. For Greene, “only when individuals are empowered to interpret the situations they live together do they become able to mediate between the object-world and their own consciousness, to locate themselves to that freedom can appear.”¹³² My comparison here of the ROM’s public consultation on *Into the Heart of Africa* which was handled as marketing exercise rather than as collaboration between constituencies who might share in the meaning making process, and the co-

management approach to the Peterborough repatriation, which began with an invitation to dialogue and a true sharing and negotiation of power and decision making, illustrates Greene's point.

As argued in the previous chapter, the modern museum's conceptualization of the visitor reveals the institution as a product of Enlightenment rationality and the bourgeois state. Its view of its own role in society and its assumptions about the visitor's expectations, abilities and behaviours are organized by a deep faith in the power of reason. Importing and emulating techniques and of scientific study techniques such as objectivity, the radical separation of subject from object, deductive and inductive analysis-the modern museum transmogrifies them into social values that are promoted and enacted in a set of "civilizing rituals," as Duncan has called them. As a result, the modern museum typically promotes scholarly authority and relies on the values of neutrality and objectivity to resist examining issues of controversy or contemporary concern that might "politicize" the institution and contravene its public service mandate. At best, the modern museum might offer a range of political perspectives and allow visitors to make a choice. The modern museum is, thus, a static institution, removed from the political fray and offering the sanctuary of reason and quiet contemplation.

The new museology rejects the conventional concept of the museum visitor as passive and atomized and sees a decentralized, de-institutionalized museum working in and with the community. Contemplation and intellectual pleasure are supplanted by the participation and involvement of the visitor. The new museum invites the individual to

exercise his knowledge and experience, calling upon him as a decision-maker, an actor, a museographer rather than merely a guest.

Younger members of the museum profession (in Canada, for example, Rivard) have successfully promoted the emphasis on museums playing a key social role in community development and multicultural awareness. Monpetit has argued that amongst the functions of the museum, “we do not place enough emphasis on this heritage function, which has to do with holding a mirror up to the community and informing it who and what it is and where it fits within the world, national and local heritages that its members appropriate to a greater or lesser extent.”¹³³ Monpetit’s comments are made within the national framework, but they are applicable within the localized perspective of smaller museums like Peterborough's Centennial Museum and Archives. Monpetit’s emphasis on the heritage aspect of museums reflects traditional approaches to the educative function of museums, which are committed to effecting continuities rather than preparing the ground for what is to come and exploring the community's capacity to surpass the given. Rivard and others want to make room for the notion of a living history and a social role for museums therein.

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) has commented on the central role of museums in human development at community level. At its 1972 meeting in Santiago, ICOM declared: “...the emergence of the central role of museums as both an expression of cultural identity and as a powerful force for human development and education at both the individual and community level.” Further, in 1989 at The

Hague, ICOM perceived museums as: “...generators of culture and as places where we can look for meaning of the world around us.”¹³⁴

In education, experiential learning as a conduit to social change and is associated with the theories and practices of educationists Friere, Gramsci, and Giroux. Proponents of this approach argue that perception, language and the development and application of knowledge cannot be divorced from the social context. They are interested in understanding the patterns that cut across individual experience and hold that the context in which experience occurs and is interpreted is the essential content for learning. Individual experience is not seen as independent of power relations in society.

The social change approach to experiential learning asks us to recognize and identify the dominant assumptions or ideologies from the wider society that we have internalized. So learning from experience helps us to become aware of the meaning systems that envelop us, so that we can move from awareness to action that will emancipate our societies and ourselves from those systems that exercise hegemonic control. Social change proponents advocate “re-vision” as an experiential learning process, whereby experience can be reclaimed and alternative interpretations of prior learning can emerge. An example of the re-vision technique that has played out recently on a societal scale is the reclaiming of value in aboriginal culture and tradition by First Nations survivors of the residential school system.

“Re-vision” stands in contrast to the technique of “reflection” that is associated with the personal growth approach to experiential learning. Reflection is linked to therapy and counseling—inner and past experiencing is the primary concern. In “re-vision,” the

meaning of individual experience is located in a broader praxis or discourse that has implications for social, political, and economic relations.

Some proponents of the social change approach do not necessarily challenge social structures, but rather focus on transforming a particular group's relationship to them. It seeks to put this issue “on the agenda,” rather than to radically subvert the socio-political structures and processes that produce the agenda in the first place. Other proponents of the social change approach identify with a group based on race, gender, class, ability or sexual orientation, and focus on taking control of their own learning. They do this by challenging received interpretations—often academic—of their own experience and by trying to understand and influence the social, historical and economic influences shaping these accounts.

The two poles of “knowledge for self-awareness” and “knowledge for social action” describe a fundamental tension for theorists who concern themselves with the role of the museum. They also define the axis on which museum practice and policy are often debated. The positioning of any particular institution on this axis is critical—it shapes the museum's collections, exhibits, and programmes, its relationship with the community, its role as a civic resource, and as a site of learning. Certainly, this tension between reflection and social action is visible within the new museology.

The new museum's work as an educational institution includes making a population aware of its identity, strengthening that identity, and instilling confidence in a population's potential for development. For some, however, the objective of the new museum extends beyond identity formation to making concrete contributions to the

development of a region and its population. Here, the museum is envisioned as a sort of people's university—helping the community cope with everyday life by pointing out problems and possible solutions. It becomes “the place which can and must mirror the questions which individuals and social groups are asking themselves—not to supply answers, but to state the problems, point to alternatives, and offer materials and information to assist them to realize and decide what attitudes to take up.”¹³⁵

We can see both the identity formation function and the social agency function at work in the Peterborough case. According to the PCMA's manager, museum staff has a much better understanding and appreciation for native culture as a result of the repatriation activities. In his comments in the museum's newsletter, the chair of the museum's management board at the time hinted at a growth in the community that reflects the ideals of the new museum:

I think I can safely say that all who were involved in the process leading up to these ceremonies received very great gifts. We, at the Museum, were profoundly touched by the generosity with which the people of Curve Lake responded to our overtures. For a very small and long-overdue gesture of respect, we received a hand of friendship and gained a renewed appreciation for the vibrant and enduring culture and aspirations of the First Nations.... To give a little is to receive a great deal. Perhaps if, as a society, we were to worry a little less about the possible consequences of such giving, we might find that respect and generosity have a way of perpetuating themselves.¹³⁶

Doherty also notes that the repatriation has been used by members of the Curve Lake First Nation to assist in the re-emergence and re-establishment of native cultural traditions:

Since the re-burial ceremony, members of the Medewewin Society have been asked to participate in two additional funeral services. They readily acknowledge the museum as a catalyst for the renewed interest in their activities.¹³⁷

Similar positive effects of a community-based approach in museum work have also been noted in Alberta, in the agreement between the Glenbow Museum and local First Peoples. It is not overstating the case to describe results like these in terms of identity formation and community development, or to see in them the role of the new museum.

Certain critics worry that, in this more cynical age, any radical deconstruction of the established paradigms and values inherent in the modern museum will only lead us down a cul-de-sac of relativism, where it will be impossible to build any public or professional consensus on what, if anything, has lasting value and ought to be preserved for the future:

In the political sense, the potential mission of museums according to The New Museology is enlarged, even glorified, to include the fostering of social justice. But at the same time, the potential social role of museums seems diminished by the negative tone of the New Museology rhetoric. Attempts to define new missions seem riddled by doubts about the possibility of knowing in any meaningful sense, or of communicating effectively, or of presenting a message that is untainted by class or personal interests.¹³⁸

On the other hand, where there is a sense that the new museum may indeed raise key issues and challenge myths and stereotypes, it is open to charges of being out of step with government and funders and broad public opinion, and is accused of arrogance and political correctness.

Amongst museum professionals, there are those who vociferously oppose the notion of museums entering the political arena as agents of community development and social change. As the editors of *Museum Management and Curatorship* stated, in their response to a key report of the American Association of Museums:

Politically motivated sociologists have hijacked the museums.... *Excellence and Equity* will actually undermine the existing pluralism represented by a wide diversity of small, independent institutions with differing agendas, and ...will tend to replace them with amorphous multicultural entities which are hag-ridden by political correctness.¹³⁹

Others acknowledge that museums cannot be apolitical, and they can help to enable their users to understand the world in a political sense, but argue that they are not useful vehicles for directly bringing about political or social change. According to Moore, for example, the social agency potential of the new museum has been oversold. He claims that, “the benefits that museums claim to provide can be delivered more cost-effectively and directly by other agencies,”¹⁴⁰ such as universities and community centres. Weil agrees that the benefit of museums to community development should not be overplayed:

In any case, other institutions—community centres, religious centres and particularly successful local football teams—can equally be said to play a key role in developing local identity and pride.... Where a sense of community identity is identified as needing to be developed...why should a museum be the first thing that springs to mind?¹⁴¹

Certainly, where museums have attempted to work with the community to develop a local identity, it is difficult to prove their success, particularly because this sort of

success is difficult to quantify in terms of numbers of visitors or revenue generated. But those who would resist community-based museum practices on these grounds must admit that much of the value of traditional museum practice is equally difficult to measure and defend in quantifiable or economic terms. Museums have never been profitable ventures, and have always invoked humanistic performance standards, based on outcomes and influences rather than “numbers of widgets” or the “the bottom line.”

Despite the limitations of the institution and the availability of other avenues for community development and social change, Moore suggests that the relevance and future of the museum is at stake if it does not tackle key issues like war, poverty, and ethnic tension: “This is not to say that museums can radically change the world—but they can and must have some impact, to be of any benefit here and now.”¹⁴²

From an educational perspective, there seems to be significant theoretical support for the community-based museum. John Dewey’s concern was to encourage free and informed choosing within a social context where ideas could be developed “in the open air of public discussion and communication.”¹⁴³ Friere wrote of “humanization” as our primary vocation the struggle for “the overcoming of alienation,” for the affirmation of men and women as persons.¹⁴⁴ It is a matter of affirming human beings as “subjects of decisions” rather than objects, of involving men and women in the striving toward their own “completion”—a striving that can never end.

Greene has argued for the development of the civil space through schools that engage students in a living quest for freedom, which she argues as a conscious transcending of experienced resistance:

There is general agreement that the search for some kind of critical understanding is an important concomitant of the search for freedom. There is also agreement that freedom ought to be conceived of as an achievement within the concreteness of lived social situations rather than as a primordial or original possession. We might, for the moment, think of it as a distinctive way of orienting the self to the possible, of overcoming the determinate, of transcending or moving beyond in the full awareness that such overcoming can never be complete.¹⁴⁵

Certainly, the PCMA repatriation project embodies the spirit of these educationists and is an example of how community-based museum work can support communities both in identifying the constraints or deficiencies of their “reality,” and in surpassing those constraints.

The museum is inherently equipped to be a forum for the resuscitation of the civil space, as a place where community is brought together to represent itself to itself.

Greene, Friere, and others have shown that when people are brought together, in mutual pursuit of a project, new perspectives open and the individual develops or learns to take a variety of perspectives on the world, and this releases persons to become different, to repair lacks, and to take action to re-create themselves. If museums can support dialogue such as the one sustained in “Peterborough Precedent,” there is clearly a role for museums in the development of communities. As Rivard wrote in a feasibility study for the museum of the Inuit in Inukjuak, Quebec:

A museum can play a vital role in helping a society to define its present reality, collecting the images that it readily has and exhibiting/communicating these images to the people. When the museum is actively engaged in presenting and discussing the present and local images—as some do—it is a prime method for helping a

people to gain control over their activities, to clarify the issues of actuality, to discuss concerns, and to gather vitality and self-identity. . . . And the museum is able to involve people with imagining not only the past but also the present and the future, with imagining not only what is beautiful and traditional, but also social concerns, current existence, economic situations, society in general.¹⁴⁶

Conclusions

Museums are closely bound up with a society's values, and if those values change museums may also change, to the point of disappearing or being altered out of recognition. As institutions of the bourgeois state, museums are both mechanisms for social stability and the preservation of the status quo, and the means to an autonomous sense of identity and of place for those struggling to find their way in the maze of being. As Cameron notes about this duality: "The former is authoritarian, from the top down. The latter may be individualistic or communitarian but is from the bottom up. Either can be accommodated within the parameters of a liberal democracy, but there are choices to be made. . . ."¹⁴⁷ The ROM case shows that fundamental ideological changes are creating a pluralistic museum community, despite the resistance of internal and structural barriers.

I have argued that the future of the museum is contingent on its recovering some relevance and authenticity in its relation to community. There is reason for hope. Over time, the museum has responded to political and social shifts with seismic precision. As Schubert notes, "its very success is the result of exceptional flexibility and capacity to adapt—a capacity other cultural institutions do not share."¹⁴⁸ Public argument about issues ranging from the representation of non-Western cultures to definitions of art and

pornography to the repatriation of skeletal remains have all heightened awareness about the highly complex nature of the institution's task and responsibilities. But the Peterborough case shows how the museums and communities can find a way forward.

What the PCMA represents is individuals working and fighting in collaboration with one another, discovering together a power to act on what they are choosing themselves to be. It embodies the "continuing effort to attend to many voices, many languages, often ones submerged in cultures of silence or overwhelmed by official declamation, technical talk, media formulations of the so-called 'true' and the so-called 'real.' The aim is to find (or create) an authentic public space, that is, one in which diverse human beings can appear before one another as, to quote Hannah Arendt, 'the best they know how to be.'¹⁴⁹

Conclusion

In a period in which there are more museums and museum-goers than ever before, the future of the institution is in serious doubt and its role in society is under intense scrutiny. Museum professionals, academics, and cultural critics, as well as the media and the general public are raising radical questions about the nature and value of the museum in contemporary society.

This thesis explores the changing relationship of museum to community through the juxtaposition of two examples of contemporary curatorial practice. It argues that the modern museological model no longer serves an increasingly diverse and consciously pluralistic society. It suggests that new curatorial practices have begun to reshape the museum, despite institutional resistance and significant structural barriers. Finally, it celebrates a new museology that places community at the centre of its considerations and seeks to contribute to the recovery of an authentic civil space.

The modern museum is presented here as an historically specific institution tied to the emergence of the bourgeois state out of monarchical absolutism. My premise is that an understanding of the institution's historical origins is critical to the formulation and evaluation of strategies for its reinvention. The institution evolved out of a growing secularization of collecting from the later Middle Ages, with the *Wunderkammer* and the princely gallery appearing as prototypes. The major social transformations of the

18th century—the creation and broader dissemination of wealth, the development of rationalist philosophy, republicanism and the social reform movements, and the new economy of objects generated by extensive military campaigns—formed the modern museum. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, imperialism and evolutionary theory consolidated the museum’s representational regimes, while the influence of successive world fairs created internal tension between scholarship and popular education functions. Throughout the twentieth century, the growing role of education in museums has both reflected and exacerbated this tension.

This thesis revolves around the role of the museum in the democratic state. What we see in the institution’s historical trajectory from the Renaissance through the middle of the twentieth century is a gradual shift from the museum as a symbol of arbitrary power and a space designed for private pleasure toward the museum as a space designed for public instruction and an instrument serving the collective good of the state. My central proposition is that the continued evolution of Western society now demands a radical transformation of the modern museum’s approach to community if the institution is to remain vital and relevant into the future.

Theoretical ballast for the arguments made here is provided by Gramsci, Althusser, Habermas, and Foucault, and also by Greene, Giroux, and Friere in their elaboration of social theory within a specifically pedagogical context. All these theories suggest the museum acts as some form of mediating institution between the realm of the state and the realm of the individual or citizen.

Gramsci distinguishes between institutions of coercion and those, like museums, that work to organize consent in the bourgeois state. The Gramscian perspective highlights the new fluidity of social relations in the bourgeois state, perhaps a logical extension of the republican faith in the educability of the population. Therefore, for Gramsci, institutions like museums could also serve as an “organic passage” into the bourgeoisie for the popular classes.

Althusser works from a Marxist perspective and would identify institutions like museums as ideological state apparatuses, which are necessary to the reproduction of the conditions of production in advanced capitalist societies that demand highly specialized and diversified labour forces. Ideological state apparatuses function at the level of ideology and the dissemination of knowledge and work to shape the people’s imaginary relationship to the objective conditions of production.

Foucault focuses on the new disciplinary technologies arising with the bourgeois state, and shows how social institutions become sites of control and surveillance enlisting the people’s acquiescence in their own governance. In the bourgeois state, the education of the public becomes a matter of governance and the instructional potential of the museum is clearly identified both by the French republicans as well as the social reformers of Great Britain.

Habermas presents the emergence of the “bourgeois public sphere” as an historical event of 18th century European society. He also presents it as a normative ideal of rational public discussion, especially in his later work where it is reformulated more abstractly as his theory of communicative rationality. He suggests that late capitalist

society has evolved structures and habits of governance that bypass or minimize rational public discussion, and that the loss of the civil space is disadvantageous for democracy. Greene extends this search for the resuscitation of the civil space into the realm of education, building on Friere and Giroux, to develop and support a pedagogy for social change and positioning Habermas' communicative rationality as a means to creating free and equal human beings.

Hooper-Greenhill has commented on the modern museum's contradictory functions as a temple of the arts on one hand and as an instrument of popular education on the other. Oroz has elaborated extensively on this tension in the context of the development of American museums, and Roberts has developed this theme in her study of the evolution of the educational practices of museums. I suggest that both functions rely on the division of knowledge producers from knowledge consumers and the separation of museum from community.

Nowhere are the operating principles of the modern museum more transparently dysfunctional than in the context of the representation of the non-European "Other." My thesis provides some background on the nineteenth century context in which the modern museum's representative regime was consolidated, as enlightenment rationality was commandeered by evolutionary historicism to produce a meta-narrative of the progress of civilization. This meta-narrative has had profound and far-reaching consequences that complicate the museum's relationship with contemporary community, as witnessed in the response to the ROM's *Into the Heart of Africa*. However, my contention is that the root problems of the modern museum lie less in

issues of content than they do in issues of process and the means by which meaning is manufactured by public institutions.

The ROM case study represents set of curatorial practices that we have identified with the modern museum model. Hazel Da Breo and other academics who have studied Cannizzo's exhibit agree that the content itself was impeccably researched, accurately and thoughtfully presented, and unobjectionable from the standpoint of liberal scholarship. However, the *process* choices made by the museum in representing colonial Africa and European imperialism reflect an institution that claims authority and autonomy in the construction of meaning based on the Enlightenment values of scientific rationality, objectivity, and universality. My argument is that the community response to the exhibit represents an outright rejection of such claims and signals the failure of the modern model of museum practice.

The relationship of the people to the institutions of democracy has undergone a sea change since the birth of the bourgeois state. What the ROM disaster reveals is the degree to which the tenets of scientific rationality that shaped modern curatorial practice have lost their persuasiveness in today's consciously pluralistic societies. We no longer defer to institutional authority, nor assume its methodologies to be disinterested and objective. Rather, on the broad social scale, we tend to view institutions as subject to the influences of power and partial in their representations of the truth and the public good. This fundamental shift in our understanding of the role institutions play in the generation of knowledge and power is what drives the search for alternatives to the modern museum model today.

Every act of display or interpretation is always already political. No museum is or should be a place of absolute certainty. I contend that what is required is full administrative acknowledgement and acceptance of the museum as an institution operating within and shaping the civil space, as opposed to standing aloof from the fray of social subjectivity. I employ the Peterborough case study to argue that new museological practices could redefine the relationship between museum and community. The necessary implications, however, include increasing the administrative porosity of the museum organization, sharing power and limiting the autonomy and authority of the institution and engaging “official” and “vernacular” voices in a dialectical meaning-making process. I also see as a welcome, if not inevitable, change the repositioning of material culture within a larger context of heritage concerns and the redefinition of stewardship that sees community rather than science or scholarship as its touchstone.

The background I present on museums and First Nations further underscores the failure of modern museum practices shaped by the meta-narrative of progress. The retention and display of Native human skeletal remains and sacred objects, and their treatment as artifacts, implies a non-negotiable, hierarchical relationship between the “official” values of scientific study and the generation and dissemination of knowledge and the “vernacular” values of respect for the spiritual practices and sensitivities of descendants or culturally-associated groups.

In this thesis, I argue that power relations within the modern museum are skewed towards the institutional authority. It is generally the curator who decides what may be

viewed, and how and when it should be seen. The public's interaction with the collection generally consists of looking at fully completed and immaculately presented displays. As Hooper-Greenhill notes, "Those curators who understand how these practices place them in positions of power, and who wish to reduce this personal power, are finding ways to offer more opportunities to others to construct and impose their own interpretations."¹⁵⁰

Peterborough represents the deployment of a new set of operating principles for the museum that redefines the power relationship of the institution to community. If the traditional museum can be characterized as a collection in a building for a public, the new museum is ideally "without architectural barriers, without disciplinary barriers and without barriers to public access."¹⁵¹ The idea here is that the Peterborough precedent is an embodiment of museum as process. If community and process are taken as fundamental, the museum's educational scope broadens significantly. The focus is also on current community concerns and the future, not necessarily preserving the past. In the Peterborough case, we can discern an attempt to enter, create, or sustain an authentic public space. As Greene notes, "such a space requires the provision of opportunities for the articulation of multiple perspectives in multiple idioms, of which something common can be brought into being."¹⁵²

A major concern within current museology is the future of material culture and the role of the object in the museum. Many museum professionals insist on the primacy of the object and warn that museums that rely on "story-centred" programming, rather than "object-centred" programming, are preparing their own obsolescence since they then

bring themselves into competition with other social institutions better equipped to perform the same functions. My contention is that these concerns are ill-founded on two counts: first, there is room in society for more than one type of social institution that conducts research and presents the results publicly; and second, if objects do not speak for themselves, then museums are necessarily in the business of providing stories—in the form of context and interpretation—to support their presentation to the public.

I do not share the alarm expressed in some corners over the shift of museums from object-based to story-based institutions. While I am not suggesting the abandonment of the study and interpretation of material culture as a means to knowledge, I see great potential in the expansion of museum activity beyond the bank-of-things to interpretive pursuits that encourage the consideration of non-material manifestations of heritage.

Museums are closely bound up with a society's values, and, if those values change, museums may also change to the point of disappearing or being altered out of recognition. We continue to see the museum as an oasis of calm untouched by the storms of politics and history, though nothing could be further from the truth. Despite the resistance of internal and structural barriers, fundamental ideological changes are changing the way museums construct and manage meaning, as well as how they perceive and relate to the community. Over time, its flexibility and capacity to adapt—rather than its ability to hold steady to the precepts of the modern museum model—will ensure its continued relevance and vitality in society.

Notes

- ¹ Karsten Schubert, *The Curator's Egg: The Evolution of the Museum Concept from the French Revolution to the Present Day* (London: One-Off Press, 2000), 9.
- ² G. Ellis Burcaw, *Introduction to Museum Work* (London: Alta Mira Press, 1997), 32.
- ³ Boylan describes the fifth cycle (post-World War II) as by far the most important quantitatively, but questions whether the cycle has reached, or perhaps passed its apogee. He argues that the key threat to the survival of many museums at this time is economic liberalism (globalization and the objectives of privatization of public services). Boylan's full argument is made in the article "Les musées face à la décroissance," found in Michel Côté and Lisette Ferera, Eds., *New Trends in Museum Practice* (Ottawa, ON: ICOM Canada and Canadian Heritage, 1997), 17-42.
- ⁴ Schubert, *Curator's Egg*, 9.
- ⁵ Stephen E. Weil, *Making Museums Matter* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002.), 5.
- ⁶ Hence "museum," house of the muses, "mouseion" in Greek.
- ⁷ Duncan Cameron, "Closing the Shutters on 'The Window on the World.'" In Côté and Ferera, Eds., *New Trends in Museum Practice* (Ottawa, ON: ICOM Canada and Canadian Heritage, 1997), 161.
- ⁸ cf. Kevin Moore, *Museums and Popular Culture* (London: Cassell, 1997), 13.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Raymond Monpetit, "Museums and Knowledge: Sharing Awareness, Addressing Desire." In Michel Côté and Annette Viel, Eds., *Museums: Where Knowledge is Shared* (Ottawa, ON: ICOM Canada and Canadian Heritage, 1995), 38.
- ¹¹ For example, while an abstract expressionist painting may be identifiable as a whole and singular entity, for many viewers it is no more "explicitly significant" than a shard of ancient pottery, and no less in need of supporting context, which is amply provided by today's art museum—with labels or explanatory panels accompanying the work, exhibit brochures or fact sheets, catalogues raisonnés, self-guided audio tours, and thematic lectures or expert panel discussions.
- ¹² Burcaw, *Museum Work*, 31.
- ¹³ Schubert, *Curator's Egg*, 15.
- ¹⁴ Cameron in Côté and Ferera, *New Trends*, 161.
- ¹⁵ Burcaw, *Museum Work*, 26.
- ¹⁶ cf. Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 40.
- ¹⁷ Eileen Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 78.
- ¹⁸ Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (London: Routledge, 1995), 22.
- ¹⁹ Michael Levin, *The Modern Museum: Temple or Showroom?* (Tel Aviv: Dvir Publishing House, 1983), 15.
- ²⁰ This unprecedented displacement of local material culture was, of course, only extended and intensified in the nineteenth century as European nations colonized Africa, Asia and the Americas.
- ²¹ The artistic conquest was organized as systematically as the military and techniques were developed to facilitate the identification and removal of works from conquered territories. In his *Birth of the Museum*, Bennett explains that artists, naturalists, and other technical experts were assigned to accompany the invading forces so that works could be removed immediately following the arrival of the shock troops, when conditions were still chaotic and before the owners could hide their property. Various peace treaties following the invasions ensured legal transfer of the booty.
- ²² Hooper-Greenhill, *Shaping of Knowledge*, 173.
- ²³ Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*, 39.
- ²⁴ Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 35.
- ²⁵ Schubert, *Curator's Egg*, 17.

- ²⁶ Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 34.
- ²⁷ Ibid., 41.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 42.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 36.
- ³⁰ Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*, 68.
- ³¹ Ibid., 67.
- ³² Ibid., 69.
- ³³ See, for example, *Discipline and Punish*, in which Foucault describes the advent of the modern penitentiary and analyzes incarceration as the bourgeois state's alternative to the public punishments and executions for infractions against the King.
- ³⁴ Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*, 89.
- ³⁵ Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 24.
- ³⁶ Ibid., 26.
- ³⁷ Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1938), 113. Mumford made this statement in reference to the opening of the British Museum in 1759, which he celebrates as the first true museum. However, other authors, such as Duncan and Schubert, have pointed out that the British Museum's relationship with the "public" is complicated.
- ³⁸ Schubert, *Curator's Egg*, 18.
- ³⁹ cf. Schubert, *Curator's Egg*, 19.
- ⁴⁰ Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*, 39.
- ⁴¹ cf. Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 40.
- ⁴² cf. Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*, 18.
- ⁴³ cf. Kevin Moore, *Museums and Popular Culture* (London: Cassell, 1997), 29.
- ⁴⁴ Hooper-Greenhill, *Shaping of Knowledge*, 172.
- ⁴⁵ Schubert, *Curator's Egg*, 22.
- ⁴⁶ Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 32.
- ⁴⁷ Schubert, *Curator's Egg*, 23.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., 27.
- ⁴⁹ Hooper-Greenhill, *Shaping of Knowledge*, 171.
- ⁵⁰ Lisa C. Roberts, *From Knowledge to Narrative* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 27.
- ⁵¹ cf. Levin, *Temple or Showroom*, 12.
- ⁵² Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*, 11.
- ⁵³ Burcaw, *Museum Work*, 33.
- ⁵⁴ Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*, 90.
- ⁵⁵ cf. Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*, 87.
- ⁵⁶ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, edited and translated by Q. Hoare and G. Nowell-Smith (London: Lawrence & Wishart International Publishers, 1971), 260.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid., 247.
- ⁵⁸ cf. Roberts, *Knowledge to Narrative*, 121.
- ⁵⁹ Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 16.
- ⁶⁰ Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*, 73.
- ⁶¹ Ibid., 72. According to Bennett, visits at the British museum, for example, increased from 720,643 in 1850 to 2,230,242 in 1851.
- ⁶² Ibid. Bennett reports that the number of public museums in Britain increased from 50 in 1860 to 200 in 1900. The Museum Bill of 1845 had long empowered local authorities to establish museums and art galleries, but only after the model of the South Kensington Museum were significant numbers of local public museums established.
- ⁶³ Hooper-Greenhill, *Shaping of Knowledge*, 170-171.
- ⁶⁴ Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes toward an Investigation)" in *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 139.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid., 148.
- ⁶⁶ Burcaw, *Museum Work*, 183.
- ⁶⁷ See, for example, Neil Nevitte's international study on citizenship and governance, *The Decline of Deference: Canadian Value Change in Comparative Perspective 1981-1990* (Toronto: Broadview Press, 1996).

- ⁶⁸ For this journalistic description of *Into the Heart of Africa*, I rely primarily on Hazel Da Breo's article "Royal Spoils: The Museum Confronts its Colonial Past," which appeared in *Fuse* (Winter 1989-1990), 28-35. I also rely on Da Breo's interview with the exhibit's curator, the transcript of which appears in the same issue of the journal (36-37), along with several newspaper articles garnered from the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star* newspapers.
- ⁶⁹ Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 25.
- ⁷⁰ Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*, 76.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 78.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, 79.
- ⁷³ Wittlin cf. Eileen Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 174.
- ⁷⁴ Schubert, *Curator's Egg*, 23.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.
- ⁷⁶ Monpetit, in Côté and Viel, *Where Knowledge is Shared*, 44.
- ⁷⁷ Cameron, "Closing the Shutters," 176.
- ⁷⁸ Robert Goldwater, *Primitivism in Modern Art* (New York: Routledge, 1967), 13.
- ⁷⁹ Levin, *Temple or Showroom?*, 43.
- ⁸⁰ Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 80.
- ⁸¹ Mary Hellen Herbert, et al., "Education at the Museum: Shared Knowledge," in Michel Côté and Annette Viel, Eds., *Museums: Where Knowledge is Shared* (Ottawa, ON: ICOM Canada and Canadian Heritage, 1995), 124.
- ⁸² Lynette Harper, "From Temple to Battlefield: Conflicting Ideologies in the Museum," in *Muse* (Fall 1993), 2.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁴ Jeanne Cannizzo, "Hazel Da Breo Interviews Dr. Jeanne Cannizzo," in *Fuse* (Winter 1989-1990), 38.
- ⁸⁵ Hazel Da Breo, "Royal Spoils" in *Fuse* (Winter 1989-1990), 36.
- ⁸⁶ Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 8.
- ⁸⁷ Cannizzo, "Da Breo Interviews..." , 37.
- ⁸⁸ Schubert, *Curator's Egg*, 15.
- ⁸⁹ Roberts, *Knowledge to Narrative*, 124.
- ⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 127.
- ⁹¹ Schubert, *Curator's Egg*, 15.
- ⁹² Da Breo, "Royal Spoils," 33.
- ⁹³ Ivan Karp, "Culture and Representation," in I. Karp and S. Lavine, *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1991), 16.
- ⁹⁴ Ayanna Black reported in the *Toronto Star* that only 12 out of nearly 500 permanent positions at the ROM were filled by Black staff. Da Breo claimed the ROM's donors and members included disproportionately low numbers of Afro-Canadians.
- ⁹⁵ Geraldine Norman "America's Art Behind Closed Doors" in the *London Times* 1972, cf. Levin, *Temple or Showroom*, 23.
- ⁹⁶ David Goa, (Introduction) *Cultural Diversity and Museums: Exploring Our Identities* (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Museums Association and Department of Canadian Heritage, 1994), no pagination.
- ⁹⁷ Harper, "Temple to Battlefield," 4.
- ⁹⁸ Monpetit, in Côté and Viel, *Where Knowledge is Shared*, 38.
- ⁹⁹ Moore, *Museums and Popular Culture*, 10.
- ¹⁰⁰ The title was originally coined by a segment of the archaeological community as a disparaging response to the museum's initiative, which was equated with book burning and portrayed as the beginning of the end for research based on ethnographic and archaeological artefacts.
- ¹⁰¹ The PCMA is operated under the city's Community Services Department, as a major component of its Culture and Heritage Division. A Culture and Heritage Board, appointed by City Council, governs the division and manages the museum. The Board consists of local community members at large, two aldermanic appointees, as well as organizational representatives from the Historical Society, and other local arts and culture organizations. The PCMA is one of Canada's typical small museums, with an annual budget of under \$300,000 and a permanent staff of fewer than three people. Its primary source of funding is the city (approximately 70%), with roughly 10% coming from the province of Ontario,

and 20% from earned revenues.

¹⁰² Ken Doherty, *The Peterborough Precedent* (Peterborough, ON: Peterborough Centennial Museum & Archives, no date), 3.

¹⁰³ The process developed cooperatively by the PCMA and the Curve Lake First Nation was consistent with recommendations outlined in a later report issued jointly by the Assembly of First Nations and the Canadian Museums Association. The authors of the report, and members of the task force studying issues related to Canadian museums and their relationship with the First Nations, were aware of the repatriation process underway in Peterborough at the time of their study.

¹⁰⁴ Chief Mel Jacobs, cf. Doherty, *Peterborough Precedent*, 6.

¹⁰⁵ Gerald McMaster, "Object (to) Sanctity: The Politics of the Object," in *Muse* (Fall 1993), 1.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ Doherty, *Peterborough Precedent*, 2.

¹⁰⁸ Assembly of First Nations and the Canadian Museum Association, *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples* (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Museums Association, 1994), 2.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹¹¹ Julian Spalding, "Interpretation? No, Communication," in *Muse* (Fall 1993), p. 5.

¹¹² Moira G. Simpson, *Making Representations: Museums in the Post-Colonial Era* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 3.

¹¹³ For an elaboration of the means and objectives by which the "new museum" might function, see the works of de Varine and Rivard. Hooper-Greenhill, Weil, Duncan, Schubert, and others cited in this thesis provide a less "operational" perspective and provide consideration of historical and philosophical issues related to museum practice.

¹¹⁴ Belcher, cf. Moore, *Museums and Popular Culture*, 38.

¹¹⁵ Moore, *Museums and Popular Culture*, 23.

¹¹⁶ Hugues de Varine, "A Grass-Roots Revolution: Community Initiative in Culture," in *Culture*, (Vol. 5: No. 1, 1978), 83.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ René Rivard, "Museums and the Civilization of Knowledge," in Michel Côté and Annette Viel, Eds., *Museums: Where Knowledge is Shared* (Ottawa, ON: ICOM Canada and Canadian Heritage, 1995), 96.

¹¹⁹ Moore, *Museums and Popular Culture*, 51.

¹²⁰ Doherty, *Peterborough Precedent*, 8.

¹²¹ Monpetit in Côté and Viel, *Where Knowledge is Shared*, 54.

¹²² Weil, *Making Museums Matter*, 36.

¹²³ Roberts, *Knowledge to Narrative*, 69.

¹²⁴ Claudia Notzke, "Co-managing Aboriginal Cultural Resources," in *Muse* (Fall 1996), 4.

¹²⁵ Rivard in Côté and Viel, *Where Knowledge is Shared*, 103.

¹²⁶ De Varine, "A Grass-Roots Revolution," 66.

¹²⁷ More detailed description of community-based governing structures may be gleaned from the works of de Varine and Rivard. Andrea Hauenschild also provides an excellent summary of new museological principles including governing structures.

¹²⁸ Karp in Karp and Lavine, *Exhibiting Cultures*, 24.

¹²⁹ Maxine Greene, *The Dialectic of Freedom* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1988), 23.

¹³⁰ Monpetit in Côté and Viel, *Where Knowledge is Shared*, 54.

¹³¹ Greene, *Dialectic of Freedom*, 119.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 122.

¹³³ Monpetit in Côté and Viel, *Where Knowledge is Shared*, 47-8.

¹³⁴ Emlyn H. Koster, "The Human Journey and the Evolving Museum," in *Museums: Where Knowledge is Shared*, Michel Côté and Annette Viel, Eds., (Ottawa, ON: ICOM Canada and Canadian Heritage, 1995), 82.

¹³⁵ De Varine, "A Grass-Roots Revolution," 84.

¹³⁶ William Ramp, "Giving and Receiving" in *The Penny Farthing* (Peterborough, ON: Peterborough Centennial Museum & Archives, June, July, & August, 1991), 7.

¹³⁷ Doherty, *Peterborough Precedent*, 10.

- ¹³⁸ Deirdre C. Stam, "The Informed Muse: The Implications of 'The New Museology' for Museum Practice," in *Museum Management and Curatorship* (12: 1993), 275.
- ¹³⁹ *Museum Management and Curatorship* (8: 1994), 125.
- ¹⁴⁰ Moore, *Museums and Popular Culture*, 22.
- ¹⁴¹ Weil, *Making Museums Matter*, 24.
- ¹⁴² Moore, *Museums and Popular Culture*, 31.
- ¹⁴³ Dewey, cf. Greene, *Dialectic of Freedom*, 6.
- ¹⁴⁴ Paulo Friere, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1970), 28.
- ¹⁴⁵ Greene, *Dialectic of Freedom*, 5.
- ¹⁴⁶ Rivard in Côté and Viel, *Where Knowledge is Shared*, 106.
- ¹⁴⁷ Cameron in Côté and Ferera, *New Trends*, 160.
- ¹⁴⁸ Schubert, *Curator's Egg*, 11.
- ¹⁴⁹ Greene, *Dialectic of Freedom*, xi.
- ¹⁵⁰ Hooper-Greenhill, *Shaping of Knowledge*, 7.
- ¹⁵¹ Tomislav Sola interviewed by Johanne Landry, "Conversations at the Crossroads," in *Muse* (Winter 1996), 48.
- ¹⁵² Greene, *Dialectic of Freedom*, xi.

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