Imperfectly Progressive

The Social Mission of Museums in the 1930s

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Emerging from its chrysalis, the still [history] museum of the past will become active and to attain a commanding place in our community life. And in that day it will be said: “It is not what the museum has but what it does with what it has that counts in community value.”

—Arthur C. Parker (Seneca)
“The Small History Museum” (1935)

Arthur Casewell Parker, director of the Rochester Museum of Arts and Science and a prolific author whose works include A Manual for History Museums (1935), had much to say on the matter of what collecting institutions ought to do with their historical artifacts and for their communities.1 “Mr. Parker conceives of the history museum as neither a mausoleum nor warehouse,” remarked one reviewer of the Manual, “but as an institution for service, a dispenser of ideas, a stimulus to social action.”2 In fact, as Parker himself declaimed, “A museum is a social service.”3 He did not stand alone in this conviction. Parker’s museum contemporaries recognized him as a “trail blazer” during his lifetime.4

Indeed, the 1930s mark a period in the United States of America when a number of the field’s practitioners advocated that museums, of all disciplinary stripes, become more actively involved in “the life of the people” through attentiveness to contemporary social concerns, adult-focused education initiatives, and narrative forms of object display.5 More progressive spirits...
advocated that history as told through artifacts be treated as a resource from which communities could make decisions about the here and now—with a more knowing eye to the future. Such an idea finds resonance in Rebecca Conard’s description of public historians’ animating conviction: “At its core, the public history impulse springs from a fundamental belief in the utility of history and a persistent quest to apply historical knowledge to the contemporary needs of society.”

The decade, which falls within the longer arc of museums’ institutional “paradigm shift” from “collection-driven” to “visitor-centered,” also tracks with an important period in the genealogy of public history, as has been traced through the National Park Service and its museums by Denise D. Meringolo. By taking the quest for public history’s roots into the wider terrain of museums, the goal is to expand on the “proactive effort to historicize and theorize the attitudes and habits of mind that make public history distinctive” while being attentive to the impact that practitioners not academically trained in history have had in foregrounding values that activist public historians prize today, such as being of service to communities, connecting the past to the present, and using expressive communications methodologies that do not dismiss emotional connections as irrelevant or unprofessional. Parker, who did not hold a degree in history, had come by his training in archeology and ethnography through informal apprenticeships, self-study, and the aid of mentors with museum connections. This path, which landed him at the New York State Museum from 1906 to 1924, formed him equally into a self-described museologist. He went on to direct the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences for over twenty years. Although not the only (nor a flawless) champion for the time, Parker advocated most consistently for the public place of history in the enterprise of more socially aware, community-focused museum work.

To understand why the idea of the museum as a social actor came to the fore as it did in leading-edge practice of the 1930s and how it shaped ideas about museum-based public history, one must look to the field’s broader deliberations about the function of museums in civic life. These discussions played out in the professional literature, including some dozen books published (or in formation) during the decade. In their reflections and prognostications, museum observers paid special heed to the field’s Progressive Era past as a touchstone for its new social-civic mission. From the mix of forces and debates that will be considered here, a reignited vision of the museum as both a “social movement” and a “social instrument”
emerged. But what did this vision look like in practice, particularly in the area of museum-based presentations of history for public audiences? Certainly, the age’s aspirations lofted far above the realities of implementation. Exhibition and programming narratives very often remained bogged down in an evolutionary view of historical “progress,” with its attendant racism, nationalism, and colonialism. Still, one sees within the literature some of public historians’ hallmark concerns: acknowledging nonelites as historical actors, connecting interpretations to everyday life, and directing exhibition craft toward ends deemed socially progressive by those who created them.

So to answer the question of what the social mission of museums in the 1930s looked like in practice, this essay draws out the arc of the field’s major concerns and debates. These frictions serve as the backdrop for two short profiles of work undertaken by the Charleston Museum and the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences, which appear as sidebars in this chapter. These snapshots suggest how localized factors, in the context of the field’s bigger picture, gave shape to what “progressive” looked like when pursued by specific individuals, museums, and communities. More in-depth studies of the period are needed, of course, as underscored by the insights and lines of continued inquiry opened by Laura Schiavo’s examination in this collection of the Jewish Theological Seminary’s museum. But whereas her work for this volume provides a much needed “alternative ‘center,’” here we dive into the heart of the mainstream, Anglo-European-dominant museum culture during a period of introspective stocktaking.

**Examining Museums’ Foundations**

It has happened, time and again in the course of history, that museums have made their best progress when the foundations of things have been shaken.

—Laurence Vail Coleman

*The Museum in America: A Critical Study* (1939)

As the 1930s drew to a close, the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), supported by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, issued a landmark three-volume survey of the field: *The Museum in America: A Critical Study.* In it the chief author and AAM’s director, Laurence Vail Coleman, described American museums as a “Social Movement” gaining steam, fueled in part by their dramatically increased numbers. New museums had
appeared “at the rate of one a week,” resulting in a fourfold increase from 600 institutions in 1910 to 2,480 by 1938. Over roughly the same period capital investment in public museum facilities had increased some $144 million across the nation, with their estimated aggregate operating income growing from $2 million to “an all-time high” of $18 million. These bullish comparisons did not, however, capture the Depression’s deep trough years or its continued effects on institutional coffers. The field’s income had dropped about 20 percent between 1930 and 1935. Coleman acknowledged this statistical news of a one-fifth average decline might come as a “surprise” to those whose own institutions had seen “revenue cuts of 50, 60, 70, and even 80 per cent.” No doubt the Grand Rapids Public Museum, which saw its municipal budget cut by 87 percent, would have been among the “surprised.” The economic rebound, as measured only by the fortunes of the nation’s top one hundred “leading institutions,” was a slender 3 percent.

Still, despite such financial constraints, museums had, Coleman claimed, achieved “a more important part in the daily life of the people” as shown by the estimated 50 million visits a year. By this accounting, up to 38 percent, or better than one-third, of the nearly 130 million people living in the US might have been to a museum in 1938. Deeper within the study’s pages, however, he admitted that attendance tracking methods, formulas, and discerning what the numbers said about a museum’s success in reaching its community was not clear-cut. Almost as an aside, Coleman notes that some methods “used to bring on discussions” about whether to include the “negro population” in service calculations. This, a reference to impact measures developed by the former director of the Charleston Museum, serves as a reminder that who counted as community (and who did not) and who constituted the public (and who did not) remained circumscribed by racism, classism, xenophobia, and other forms of prejudice operative at the national and local levels.

Despite their flaws, attendance figures still provided some measure of the public’s interest; and this, the numbers said, had been falling off after a brief peak in the early 1930s. Coleman pointed first to the slow financial recovery, which curtailed operating hours, staff, and programming capacity, as a cause. But he most strongly indicted overconservative minds among those who guided museum affairs. Trustees and others who held museums to be sanctuaries for the initiated or an amusement exclusive to “a little coterie,” he argued, undermined progress by resisting museums’ necessary expansion into fuller “community service.” He warned, “Although many museum boards still linger in the socialite spirit of yesterday, the narrow
conception of the institutions’ place is passing.” Not all board members obstructed progress, claimed Edsel B. Ford, who spoke at AAM on “The New Public Museum from the Standpoint of a Trustee.” He lauded appointees from the modern corporate sector as the bringers of a “less passive and more positive participation” to institutional affairs. They brought something more than “moral and financial support” to their “adopted child,” the museum. He said, “Their close contact with the busy world about them enables them to sense the pulse of the public perhaps to a greater degree, than the somewhat absorbed and sequestered professional [museum] worker.” Such modern trustees, Ford claimed, applied their business acumen in public relations and modern merchandising-display tactics to move their museums “in the direction of greater and greater service to the public.” Providing popular educational service, he argued, was not negotiable. “The public museum of tomorrow may have to depend more and more upon governmental subsidy rather than endowments, if the earning power of its invested funds continues to shrink,” Ford stated. “If the museum is to receive public financial support, it must play an essential part in the recreation and enjoyment of people who have ever more leisure.”

With faith in endowment earnings shaken and the prospect of “great gifts” from the private sector slimmed, the field contemplated increased reliance on monetary support from municipal and federal sources as well as philanthropic organizations. The fact that city appropriations, which weighed in as the field’s second largest income source (19 percent) after endowment income (35 percent), had “only half recovered” from a 40 percent fall off during the Depression only heightened the abiding sense that public museums needed more than ever to prove worthy of their keep. Here, causes for optimism included efforts supported by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), which allowed museums to send exhibitions out to schools, settlement houses, public library branches, and other locations. The WPA, the Works Division of the Department of Public Welfare, and other government agencies also supported restoration and expansion of museum facilities, cataloging and care of collections, the installation of exhibitions, expansion of research and education activities, and generally, augmentation of existing staff so that long-deferred projects as well as ambitious new undertakings could be tackled. The funds also supported work undertaken with communities, particularly in the arts.
“Your Museum of History, rather, must be a power station sending out a current that illumines the community and gives a clearer vision of social values,” wrote Arthur C. Parker in his 1945 volume *A Manual for History Museums*. The sentence implies that these community values are intrinsically present, even if dimly perceived. Born in 1881 on the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation to a mother of Anglo-European ancestry and a Seneca father, Parker’s own personal and professional histories reveal values shaped by the complexities of navigating liminal spaces of belonging in multiple communities. The same man who tired of having “to play Indian in order to be Indian” and who in 1911 helped to found a national Native rights organization, the Society of American Indians, also advised in his *Manual* that “for an out-of-door play or pageant, there is scarcely any historical theme so effective as that of the Indian and pioneer.” That a man whose name was also Gáwasowaneh devoted six pages of “how-to” instructions to satisfying the White American penchant for “playing Indian” strikes modern eyes as a troubling concession to mainstream racism, an odd act of assimilation. Why include this appendix to the book at all?

The first line of “How to Plan a Pageant” supplies its own answer and reveals a more subversive intention. Both word order and capitalization emphasize whose story commands this play of “the Indian and the pioneer.” Indeed, of Parker’s proposed twelve acts, “the coming of the white settlers” does not occur until the ninth. Act 10 completely inverts the story of postcontact assimilation by focusing on a White captive who, after tribal adoption, enjoys “adventures” with his new “People.” The two concluding acts, as well as the first eight, focus squarely on the

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‡ On the history of such practices, see Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999).
Indians’ telling of their “discovery and settlement of the region,” self-government, and lifeways. Parker’s further instructions foreground the need to strive for historical accuracy even in the fanciful realm of reenactment. Here, Parker’s mission as a sometimes radical public historian comes to the fore. He names a dozen Indigenous leaders (many of who resisted land theft and dispossession)—from Osceola to Red Cloud (Maȟpiya Lúta)—as historical figures to be included and delineated with the same care and fullness as “pioneer fathers” William Penn, George Washington, Daniel Boone, and Sam Houston.

Would-be pageant planners are also admonished to give care to the accuracy of dress, avoiding “fancy store blankets with pseudo-Indian designs” and to “get the facts from a recognized historian or museum curator.”* In the passage, Parker resists pernicious stereotypes while also reinscribing racial categories. Indian men and women are not, he warned, to be referred to as “bucks” and “squaws.” The latter, he wrote was particularly “insulting”: “It is an evil term, and one not to be used by the government in its dealings with red people. Avoid it as you would wench, wanton or huzzy as applied to a good woman of modern times.”

At the time of *A Manual for History Museums*’ publication, Parker and staff had embarked on two museum-community collaborations, known collectively as the Seneca Arts Project, with residents of the Cattaraugus and Tonawanda reservations. Funded first through the Temporary Emergency Relief Administration and subsequently by the Works Progress Administration, craftspeople and project supervisors in the communities earned a nominal wage for their labors. For its part, the Rochester Arts and Sciences Museum provided work benches, tools, other resources, and guidance in the form of reference books, materials, photographs, and drawings from the museum’s and other institutions’ ethnographic collections representing earlier periods of Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) production. The museum would also gain artifacts, some replicating mid-nineteenth-century materials it had lost to a fire, for its collection and for trade with other institutions. Parker described the museum’s primary aims as a corrective to cultural repression, noting that “long had they been taught to imitate all the cultural

patterns of the European. Native thinking, native art, native creative ability practically had been crushed out. . . . The result has been anything but beneficial.”* Writing from the vantage point of community member and a Tonawanda project supervisor, Cephas Hill credits the community’s own experts with providing knowledge and guidance. “Old Seneca residents at Tonawanda visit the project and offer suggestions and criticisms to the younger workers,” he noted. “We discuss legends, traditions, and customs and we find in them material which we put to use.”†

The project did not, however, result in an immediately sustainable channel for the reservations’ economic development. Such “Indian New Deal” efforts, which aligned with the US federal government’s Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 and the 1935 formation of the Department of Interior’s Indian Arts and Crafts Board, were both leveraged and resisted by Native peoples. Where some saw a useful conduit to reclaiming threatened traditions, others pushed back against the narrow premodern framing of Indigenous possibility. In fact, a core grievance among resistors was the reduction of Indigenous training and work prospects to limited preindustrial forms of production that served to reinforce a colonialist vision of Native peoples as inhabiting a “past” space—a space the White market for these craft commodities could imagine as free of the state-imposed political, human, and economic costs of reservation life.‡ In Parker’s time, as now, public history collaborations undertaken as a means to illumine community and social values often prove most valuable in bringing difficult-to-face shadows to light.

The combination of support for populist outreach and fiscal pressure to provide clear community value gave the more socially progressive voices of

† Cephas Hill (Seneca) and William F. Fenton (an ethnologist), “Reviving Indian Arts among the Senecas,” in Indians at Work, 13.
the field, such as museum educator Theodore L. Low, cause to believe museums might be pushed into change:

Since the fateful events of 1929, which in many ways can be considered a blessing, the ideas of [John Cotton] Dana have been cropping out again and have finally been accepted by many museum men and educators. The old guard still clings to its sheltered concepts but others have realized that museums need a transfusion of blood and thought if they are to take their rightful place in society today. In short, they recognize that the only real justification for the existence of a museum lies in its degree of usefulness to society as a whole and that museums today are failing miserably to attain the standards necessary for continued life.34

The larger writings of Low, Coleman, and Ford reveal that even those in agreement on the ethical and financial need for museums to assume greater involvement in civic affairs did not necessarily align on the details. Debates about the nature of museums’ social mission and how best to pursue it impacted every level of museum work. In fact, AAM’s Committee on Education found it necessary, with support from both the Rockefeller Foundation and Carnegie Corporation, to research and “correlate the vast amount of controversial literature” that had been published in the 1930s.35

Ironically, the resulting volume, *The Museum as a Social Instrument: A Study Undertaken for the Committee on Education of the American Association of Museums* (1942), written by Low would itself become a source of controversy.36 Central questions dealt with how museums, as democratic institutions, might better equip the public to navigate society’s considerable changes. These included adults unmoored from work routines and in need of tools for self-advancement, the dulling effects of mass communication techniques on the public mind, propaganda in its political and corporate manifestations, the growing complexity of social and technological issues with which citizens needed to contend, and the implications of brewing European tensions and jingoism. The answers to serving as well as wooing an expanded public required, many thought, not only a resurgence of the Progressive Era social reform spirit but an embrace of contemporary mass communications techniques in service to popular education for adults.
Popular Education as Democratic Social Instrument

The democratic ideal of equal cultural opportunities for all citizens is, after all, the heart and backbone of the adult educational movement. When groups possessing social or economic power fail to fulfill their educational responsibilities to the common man, democracy is betrayed to the extent of their neglect.

—Thomas Ritchie Adam

*Civic Value of Museums* (1937)

As Coleman described it, “The thing that educators mean now by ‘adult education’ is only about a decade out of its Cradle. It is a movement to get as many people as possible self-consciously improving themselves as a regular custom through the whole span of their years.” The contemporary movement to which he referred emerged with the formation of the American Association for Adult Education (AAAE) in 1926. As other scholars have noted, the AAAE championed adult education as a democratic means to “create informed citizens, promote tolerance and understanding of differences, and maintain social stability.” Educating Americans throughout adulthood had become a topic of national focus due to the spreading phenomenon of “leisure” time in the laboring classes. Causes for this included the comparatively shorter work week of the twentieth century, the Depression’s widespread unemployment, and the National Recovery Administration’s curtailment of work hours. Many museums already had formal educational programs in place, of course, but the greater number focused on schoolchildren. Lectures, exhibitions, and offerings for the older set happened as a matter of course but not as a field-wide initiative to popularize museums’ educational approaches to adults. A 1934–35 assessment of museums’ adult education activities conducted on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation found the following: “Many of them, judged by standards of museum work in the past, seem relatively progressive and satisfactory activities. Judged by newer concepts of museum function and a growing interest in and demand for popular adult education, they appear halting and inadequate.” Given their shared interests, AAM and AAAE leadership soon sat on one another’s committees, spoke at one another’s meetings, and shared ideas in print. Commissioned by AAAE, Thomas Ritchie Adam, a professor of political science, wrote *The Civic Value of Museums* (1937) and *The Museum and Popular Culture* (1939). Adam, an admitted amateur on the topic of museums as he approached the 1937 volume, did not always grasp the “internal complications” that made some of his proposals
“facile” from the perspectives of those in the trenches. Nonetheless, on the larger issues of adult education and the expanded roles museums might play in a democratic society, practitioners found much of merit.

What emerges in Adam’s volumes and similar writings is a reweaving of older strands of Progressive thought on museums’ educational roles with concerns particular to the 1930s. Ideas such as improving workers’ lot in an industrialized democracy, which were in force before the Great War, mingled with aspirations pursued in the 1920s, such as outfitting corporate producers for international competition and preparing the public for consumer citizenship. These now intermixed with the populist ambitions of the New Deal and a worry-tinged interest in the ability of popular mass communication and advertising techniques to capture the public imagination. Here, Adam and others of the age feared that the undereducated working and middle classes would lack the criticality of mind needed to sift the wheat from the chafe of the media buffet. As with the AAAE generally and some in museums as well, Adam was wary of educational interventions and institutions that relied too heavily on government funds as the answer. These might become beholden to political influence. Here, he pointed to cultural dictatorships in Europe and Asia as evidence of the abuses that could result—and to underscore the necessity of a well-informed polity capable of independent, critical thought. Museums with their collections, he argued, could be precisely the “trustworthy authority accessible to the common man” and source of “scholarly” information that popular education needed.

While AAAE pondered museums’ roles in popular education from without, many within the nation’s institutions had already begun to put such ambitions into wider practice. Low and Grace Fisher Ramsey, associate curator of education at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), stood among these activists. Ramsey, author of *Educational Work in Museums of the United States: Development, Methods, and Trends* (1938), pointed to purpose-trained museum educators, capable of inspiring learning from objects, as the essential drivers of a transformation wherein museum collections and exhibitions might finally “serve as free and informal universities.” Instructors whose sole purpose was to provide education could earlier be found within the field. In most cases, however, curators or other museum staff handled whatever educational activities were undertaken, doing so in tandem with their primary responsibilities and often approaching public learning with different sensibilities and priorities than the professional class of educators who would follow. The writings of educator, philosopher, and psychologist John...
Dewey, whose work inspired the adult education movement, also influenced Progressive Era museum leadership directly, and perhaps none more so than John Cotton Dana, founding director of the Newark Museum. He, director Laura Bragg of the Charleston Museum, and others not only embraced the idea that popular education had the power and the duty to serve social and political ends but also formed the training programs from which many museum educators of the 1930s emerged.51

CONCEPTUALIZING COMMUNITY AT THE CHARLESTON MUSEUM

Contemporaries of Paul Marshall Rea (1879–1948) and Laura Bragg (1881–1978) would have counted them as among the spectrum of progressive-minded museum professionals of their day. This said, looking at their bodies of work illuminates the importance of parsing the individual as well as collective boundaries of the social movement within museums in any time period but, certainly, as it existed in the twentieth century prior to World War II. The two worked together at the Charleston Museum in South Carolina. When Bragg came to the museum at Rea’s invitation in 1909, he had been its curator since 1903 and then, through a negotiated title change, its director. Rea, an academic biologist by training, had transformed the languishing Museum of the College of Charleston into simply the Charleston Museum. This shift to becoming a community-focused entity involved a move off campus as well as the new name.* Assuming the title of librarian (later changed to “Curator of Books and Public Instruction”), Bragg quickly expanded the museum’s services for and engagement with the area’s segregated public schools, both Black and White.

Still, as reflected in its 1915 municipal charter of incorporation as “a general museum and library of art, science, and industry,” Jim Crow politics held sway, spelling out in writing that White citizens constituted the public to be served.† Nonetheless, Bragg, Rea, and

* The College of Charleston was but one of the museum’s many homes and incarnations since its 1773 founding as an endeavor of the Charleston Library Society.
museum trustees chipped away at the restrictions in a gradualist fashion. By 1917, policy extended admission to teacher-accompa
dined Black school groups—a loophole that Benjamin F. Cox, the Fisk University—educated principal of the nearby Avery Normal Institute, wasted no time in leveraging.* Bragg assumed the directorship after Rea’s departure in 1920. Within her first year, and with municipal sup-
port, she instituted Saturday afternoon hours for Black visitors, where previously only those—adult or child—associated with pre-arranged school visits could gain entry. Others have highlighted Bragg’s mul-
tiple radicalities as an educator, woman director, possible lesbian, and individual who since childhood dealt with profound, progressive hear-
ing loss.† They have dealt, too, with her privileges as a Northern-born, Simmons College—educated White woman undertaking social welfare work in a community to which she was an outsider.

Among the issues bearing deeper scrutiny, however, is the role Cox
and others within the local Black community played in bringing about these changes. Likewise, Rea’s later reflections on Black museumgo-
ing underscore limits to the vision of museums as social instruments. In 1932, Rea, now the director of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, published a statistical study commissioned by the Carnegie Corpora-
tion and its Advisory Group on Museum Education (to which Rea served as a consultant).‡ The Carnegie Corporation hoped to provide funders like itself, museum directors, trustees, and others, including municipali-
ties, with a quantitative means of assessing “the museum-community

* Allen, 63.
‡ Rea also had deep ties with the American Alliance of Museums. He had been present at its establishment in 1906, assumed its secretaryship in 1907, and from 1919–21 was its director.
With such metrics in hand, leaders could rely on sound social science, rather than “blind guesswork,” to steer their museums along a path of increased public usefulness.†

The matter of who “the public” excluded came to the fore in Rea’s description of Charleston. He called it an aberrant city, lacking a “normal” suburban population to counterbalance the fact that Whites accounted for only about half of its urban demographic.‡ He deemed the “large negro population” a “handicap” in determining the Charleston Museum’s efficacy in serving its constituency. Not only did the African American population reportedly attend the museum rarely and in small number, “the white population” paid “nearly all the taxes” that supported the institution. To resolve the quandary, Rea reported two sets of figures: one calculated using the total census and another featuring a refined Whites-only subset to reflect a truer measure of the museum’s service. The text did not in any way consider how segregation, the deep scars of slavery, or the museum’s own shifting admission policies affected these statistics. Similarly, neither Rea nor the volume’s reviewers commented on whether this excluded audience merited museums’ attention.§ In essence, by tacit agreement, the public and Whiteness remained synonymous throughout much of the literature, as well as much of the practice, of those who were, nonetheless, pushing socially progressive agendas.

Other museum functions also underwent professionalization during this period. A number of art historians who completed a course of study at Harvard University’s Fogg Art Museum took up positions as directors and curators at leading institutions.52 The differences in training sometimes served to place

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† Rea, 19.
‡ Rea, 41–42.
§ Though, as George E. Hein, notes in Progressive Museum Practice (163–65), Rea’s data on branch museums may ultimately have helped paved the way to the later advent of the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum. See also Hein’s profile of Bragg (87–95).
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scholarly connoisseurship in opposition to public education. As Coleman put it, the sore point had become, “Are museums primarily educational, or are they for only such educational work as can be carried on without limiting the curatorial function?” He further noted, “The real question now is whether the two different roles will tend to differentiate museums of two classes—the collectors of objects and the leaders of people, with scholarship given to the one and recreation to the other, and with education divided between them according to its nature, and theirs.” While Coleman imagined this divide as sorting museums into different classes, it had the effect, in some cases, of pitting staff in the same institution against one another as exhibitions, education, and other public-directed functions received greater shares of limited budgets and internal resources. Ramsey’s own institution, the AMNH, experienced such a row when modernization of displays brought accusations from research staff of a flagging commitment to scholarship. Low noted that professional “jealousies” had the “devastating result” of dividing museums generally so that “scholars have come to look with disdain upon popular education and popular education has, in turn, come to decry the narrow-minded haughtiness of the scholars.” The solution, according to Low, was for all to agree that “the purpose and the only purpose of museums is education in all its varied aspects from the most scholarly research to the simple arousing of curiosity.”

For the task of stimulating a curiosity for learning among adults, museums of the 1930s grew increasingly interested in adapting to their purposes the display tactics of merchandisers and narrative formats familiar to the public from contemporary mass media. The impulse, with its echoes of John Cotton Dana’s praise for department store display practices, was not a novel one. But it did gain renewed traction within the field as well as investment from philanthropic groups. The Rockefeller Foundation, for example, sponsored in-depth studies of 1939’s Golden Gate International Exposition and New York World’s Fair. These resulted in two books detailing the exhibition practices corporations and countries used to attract, engage, and impart information to a wide public.

**Didactic Exhibitions: Information or Indoctrination?**

An exhibition of symbols—conveying what somebody thinks about something—is a break with custom.

—Laurence Vail Coleman

*The Museum in America: A Critical Study* (1939)
In rethinking their roles and reach in society, museums also rethought how human-thing interactions produced knowledge and conveyed meaning. At the vanguard were pointedly didactic exhibitions conceived of as immersive narrative encounters that engaged museumgoers as sensory, embodied beings in order to inspire civic spirit and even social action. The same year that AAM published *The Museum in America*, some two hundred of its members convened in San Francisco for its annual meeting, which took the theme “Interpretation through Exhibits” and included sessions held within the Golden Gate International Exposition grounds. Many of these, from museums of various types, considered “the didactic functions of museum display in relation to other purposes and functions of exhibits.” Of the many talks later distributed in print, perhaps it is one given on “The Place of the Museum in Adult Education” that most strongly hints at the double-edged sword that this trend in exhibition craft presented. Arranging objects so that they told “a definite story” by “synthesiz[ing] basic facts into a dramatic unity” provided a compelling way to attract museumgoers’ attention and communicate a “main idea” such that they not only grasped that idea but also made some connection between it and their “daily life and well-being.” The dilemma was this: how to use the persuasive communications strategies that made mass media messaging and even political propaganda emotionally resonant and compelling for the accomplishment of democratic social agendas without also becoming agents of indoctrination.

In that AAM presentation, Morse A. Cartwright, executive director of the AAAE, pointed to political events in Europe and described popular education as a bulwark against fascism. He called on museums “to assume their proper and rightful educational role in the developing culture of the democracy.” Failure to “meet the challenge of that opportunity,” he said would leave museums and other agencies for adult education “to suffer the general fate that will sweep away all our democratic institutions when the totalitarian state prevails” or, perhaps worse, leave them to an “inglorious sentence of serving in perpetuity as propaganda arms of the government in power.” Certainly, museum professionals did not need to look far to see the dangers of exhibition craft bent to the state’s will. For example, Hitler’s ousting of disfavored staff in German museums soon after his rise to power—along with the 1937 Munich showing of *Entartete Kunst* (Degenerate art), which reportedly drew twenty thousand spectators a day—gave cause for alarm. Likewise, Italy’s *Mostra della rivoluzione fascista* (Exhibition of the fascist revolution;
1932) deepened concerns in some quarters over talk that US museums might increase their reliance on government funding and thereby open the door to unwanted state influence.\textsuperscript{67}

The matter of how democratic forms of persuasive education could be advanced without veering into the territory of political propaganda generated much debate. Within the Rockefeller Foundation, for example, some felt “a democracy-enhancing balance between education and propaganda” might be achieved in films and other tools designed to shape public opinion.\textsuperscript{68} In parsing the period’s museum literature, it is important to understand that the term \textit{propaganda} carried a broader meaning than is common today. The older, ecclesial sense of the word, “to disseminate or propagate,” often functioned as a value-neutral shorthand for contemporary public relations and marketing strategies. That said, US opinion leaders and the public alike viewed the suite of persuasive communications techniques bundled under the term \textit{propaganda} with “morbid fascination.”\textsuperscript{69} Concerned with its abuses during the Great War and uses in the rising field of advertising, they worried over who in the US had mastery of such tools and to what ends they would be used.\textsuperscript{70} Passages such as the following from Edward L. Bernays’s \textit{Propaganda} (1928), one of the better-known texts among corporate readers, seemed to underscore the stakes: “Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country. . . . It is they who pull the wires which control the public mind.”\textsuperscript{71}

Bernays, a self-proclaimed propaganda counselor and pioneer in the new field of public relations (who would speak at AAM in 1942), held that the masses looked first to a “trusted leader” when “making up its mind.”\textsuperscript{72} For its part the AAAE hoped to ensure public institutions, such as museums, libraries, and schools, did not cede that leadership to government or industry. Adam, in \textit{The Museum and Popular Culture}, again urged museums to redouble popularizing and extending their adult education efforts because, in his assessment, public ignorance made it possible for small factions to manipulate opinions and thereby rise to power.\textsuperscript{73} Indeed, some museums, by adapting persuasive communications techniques to object display, likewise hoped to more vigorously participate in the marketplace of ideas competing for the public mind.

The catch for those practicing this still nascent style of exhibition craft was the need to reconcile purposive education with social aims and the mandate that museums ought to “speak about objects, not about notions
symbolized by objects.” Here, Coleman wrote with specific concern for the use of “models, charts, and objects that stand for sophisticated concepts,” a practice most evident in industrial and social museums. “An exhibition of symbols—conveying what somebody thinks about something—is a break with custom,” he warned. The goal for museums, Coleman cautioned, was to inform minds, not produce actions. Among the offending exhibitions to which he referred might have been 1934’s *Housing Exhibition of the City of New York* at the Museum of Modern Art. This show, sponsored with the museum by the New York City Housing Authority and other agencies, positioned architectural design as an essential tool of social reform. Through blueprints, statistical charts, architectural models, enlarged photographs, and even a flat reassembled from a demolished old-law tenement house, it presented the case for slum removal.

This effort and others like it echoed civic exhibits organized in the Progressive Era by government agencies, professional associations, museums, and other civic groups, sometimes in cooperation with one another, and that tackled such topics such as child welfare, city planning, health, worker safety, and other problems of modernity. Those in Coleman’s camp not only found the presence of a social directive to be a disconcerting diversion from the purpose of museums but also expressed valid worries over museum exhibits that lacked in the stabilizing anchor of artifacts’ objective truths:

This method of display has its values and its dangers. It is thoughtful and awake. It can narrate—which is an important point for history museums. But also it falls easily into making what is little more than an illustrated book—big and cumbersome and looking like an exhibit, but really a book all the same. This practice can lead on to indoctrination. It gets away from what museums are for—to give evidence, primarily. Perhaps, when the dust of rapid change has settled—in museums of history, and of industry and science too—there will be a picture book in the hands of the visitor and museum material in museum cases.

The interpretive ambiguity—the rupture in the vision of objective (as in object-derived) artifact-inherent meaning cracked open by the trend toward narrative, storytelling frameworks—only exposed what had always been true of taxonomies and exhibition craft: that arrangements, inclusions, gaps, and omissions all constituted a material rhetoric of “what somebody thinks about something.”
Culture History in Museums Rewrites “The Material Story”

The historical museum has, as a main objective, the presentation of its subject in such a way as to visualize the history of the past so that it may serve a useful purpose in the present.

—Institute for Research, Chicago
Careers in Museum Work (1939)

Arthur Parker would have seen his own words mirrored back at him in this definition of the history museum put forth by Careers in Museum Work. It neatly echoed his own thoughts from 1935’s A Manual for History Museums, in which he stated, “Our purpose is to re-visualize the past for the benefit of the whole community, thereby making the values of the past potent to the present.”

Coleman’s The Museum in America offered a similar take: “One purpose animates museums of history. This is to recreate the past in the minds of the living. Any history museums that are themselves dead are victims not of their concern with the past but of their unconcern about the present.”

Culture history, all agreed, provided the chief intellectual framework whereby artifacts, from the size of a button to the scope of a house and its outlying grounds, could create the vivid impressions capable of popularizing study of the past by making it relevant and alive to the public.

Culture history for these authors meant the study of ordinary people through the material items they made, owned, and used. “The spirit in which local history is approached by museums is close to that of the modern historian, interested increasingly in culture history,” observed Coleman in his analysis of current trends. “Scholarly interest has shifted during recent years from political and military affairs, from the lives of leaders to the life of all the people . . . by increased attention to objective evidence.” He singled out Arthur M. Schlesinger Sr. and Dixon Ryan Fox as leaders in this approach through their History of American Life book series. Within museums that employed it, the framework breached disciplinary boundaries, as dictated by the nature of an institution’s holdings. For museums of varied collections, “the interpretation of art, history, anthropology, and applied science—all together as culture history” might provide a unity purpose, said Coleman. The approach did remain tethered to notions of history as a tale of evolution and progress, however, as witnessed by this summation: “The duties of the curator of culture history are to approach history from the standpoint of the evolution of material culture. Culture, it should be understood, is a term applied to things mankind makes or does to modify natural things.
and materials. The term does not mean ‘polite culture.’ The curator of this division of museum activity should have specialized in history, social studies, ethnology, and art. Most successful history museums are in fact museums of culture history.”

Fox, no stranger to the work of museums, had earlier written the introduction to Parker’s A Manual for History Museums, which the New York State Historical Association commissioned in hopes of bringing a greater degree of professionalization to this sector of the field. Parker himself had agitated for such a manual some ten years earlier. The Carnegie Corporation provided a subvention to make the book affordable to workers in small local institutions and to encourage broad circulation as “an indirect but potent aid to adult education.” Institutionally, then as now, the term history museum applied to a wide range of collection-holding institutions: from open-air sites to houses and other preserved structures, from the department in a “general” museum or the room or building under the aegis of a historical society, to “special history” museums devoted solely to golf, road building, crime, or some other human activity. So by AAM’s 1938 accounting, 1,235 of the tallied 2,489 museums in the US could be classified in part or in whole as history museums.

Coleman summarized the sector thus: “More places have history museums of some kind than have science or art museums, but very few places have good public history museums.” Their chief sins, to paraphrase Coleman, consisted of meddling with natural history, taking in everything “dumped upon them” by donors, and attempting to show it all without attention to meaning, organization, or historical merits. Both Parker and Fox agreed, adding that such flaws, particularly among historical society and small local museums, stemmed from the fact that they had “never been given over to the administration of trained museum men and women.” Custodians without a trained eye for culture history remained so “engrossed in written records” that they neglected modernizing their use of the object collections that “made them wealthy beyond dream.” Parker’s own training in archaeology no doubt accounted for his confidence that history could be not only read from objects but written with them as well.

On the debatable question of how objects told “the material story” of culture history, Parker had no qualms about making his views clear. “With ideas first in mind as the function of the institution, one may work and plan for the materialization of ideas,” he counseled in his Manual, further emphasizing,
“First get your ideas, ideas are to be presented, not specimens.” Such an exhibition, if well executed, would, its curators hoped, effectively act upon “the intellect and the emotions.”

The field’s deeper struggle lay not in whether museum education should provoke thought and action but the degree to which it sought to channel those impulses. In a time with greater faith in the possibility of neutrality, tensions focused on whether exhibitions were to give evidence or exposition for public benefit. On the matter of historical artifacts, the principle at issue was whether they constituted a “usable past” in terms of equipping members of the public to engage in civic life, contend with the day’s issues, and shape a better future. For adherents of philosophies like Parker’s, the purpose of history for the public was to connect the past and present in meaningful ways in order to illumine future possibilities and paths. For the most part, this meant putting history before the public, be it at the museum, in shop windows downtown, in schools, or at other community sites. It is in Parker’s views of what small and local history museums might become that glimpses of courting public participation in the work of history are seen. He envisioned “active committee chairmen” seeking out counsel to “relate the work of the museum to the needs of the community,” and the making of museums into places where an institution’s visitors and neighbors might “form the nucleus of community projects for the interpretation of history.” History museums’ work might also touch upon matters of citizenship, familiarizing people with the functions of local government and hosting events where museumgoers met with public officials. For others, to carry on such work within the history museum went beyond the pale: “The responsibility to the living carries an obligation to teach only the truth. Training in citizenship and moralizing from the past for the future is foreign to this duty.”

**Conclusion**

It is in activity that the museum succeeds; it is by ideas and not by visible storage that it lives; it is by touching the lives of the people with values that it gives inspiration.

—Arthur C. Parker

“The History Museum—an Opportunity” (1934)

Although none claimed the title of public history for their work, museum practitioners of the 1930s who dealt in interpreting and presenting the past
still grappled with concerns familiar to our field: who is “the public”; what
does it mean to place history in service to contemporary civic issues; and
how are collections useful to communities? Deeper exploration of the gap
between the visionary rhetoric and workaday realities of implementing new
practices is needed. Also needed is attentiveness to the longer arc of time over
which efforts to make museums socially progressive recur. As recounted here,
the museum as a social movement, a social instrument, arose in a histori-
cally specific set of circumstances but also drew inspiration from the work
and writings of an earlier generation—some whose lifetimes spanned the
social, economic, and political changes informing conceptions of museums’
roles in civic life. And even before The Museum in America: A Critical Study
was published, national security interests and the coming of war amplified
existing tensions within the vision of the museum as a social instrument.
This led to its derailment, for a time, from the center stage of discussions of
museum practice.

A chief reason this essay focuses on ambitions ultimately diverted by
World War II is that histories focused on trends that persisted in the long-
term tend to obscure experimental practices and institutional forms. Also a
critical reexamination of exhibition work that is dismissed today as mere pro-
paganda is in order. First, the distinctions that practitioners themselves made
between biased or misleading forms of persuasion and their own purpose-
driven exhibition craft and educational programs merit new consideration.
To ignore these is a form of misrecognition that makes little allowance
for the fact that activist public history and museum practice, even in our own
times, seek quite often to advance social agendas through some of the same
means: didactic exhibitions conceived of as immersive narrative encounters
that engage museumgoers as sensory, embodied beings. The aims are simi-
lar too: to create deeper, more compelling understandings and to guide the
embodied museal encounter toward socially relevant and useful ends. This is
not to suggest false equivalencies between the past and present but to urge
greater historical introspection within our practice.

More important than broad-brushed censure (or naïve reclamation) is
the task of examining the ways in which earlier individuals and institutions
struggled to make the museums of their time more accountable, more mean-
ingful, and more useful to a broader public. It is important to recognize these
steps along the path, even in their imperfectly conceptualized and realized
aims—not least of all for how they can lead us to ask different questions of our
own work. And as I have argued elsewhere, divorced from a deeper historical knowledge of itself, the museum field is prone to patterns of immediacy and reinvention when confronted with local and national crisis points.¹⁰³ This is a blind spot we can ill afford—least of all now.

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT MUSEUM STUDIES BOOKS AVAILABLE THROUGH HATHITRUST


Notes


of Scots-Irish ancestry. With no matrilineal Seneca tie and a father who was also of mixed heritage, Parker remained outside tribal enrollment until his adoption into the Seneca Bear Clan around age twenty-two. On the many ambiguities, contradictions, and maturing of Parker’s positions with regard to his own heritage and assimilation as a strategy for Native advancement in American society, see Joy Porter, To Be Indian: The Life of Iroquois-Seneca Arthur Caswell Parker (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001); and Chip Colwell, Inheriting the Past: The Making of Arthur C. Parker and Indigenous Archaeology (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009).


4 Frank DuMond, quoted in Zeller, 120. DuMond was a director of the Grand Rapids Public Museum and well-known voice of the period among his contemporaries.


10 When Parker came on board, the institution was called the Rochester Municipal Museum; he succeeded in changing its name to the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences in 1930.

11 Coleman, Museum in America, 1:5; Theodore L. Low, The Museum as a Social Instrument: A Study Undertaken for the Committee on Education of the American Association of


15 Epigraph: Coleman, Museum in America, 1:3.


16 Coleman, Museum in America, 1:3.

17 Coleman, 1:4, 44.

18 Coleman, 1:18; “Museum Income Last Year at All-Time High of Eighteen Million,” Museum News 17, no. 6 (September 15, 1939): 1–2. Coleman notes that the “figures take account of new museums as well as changes in older museums.” It remains unclear, given increase in number of museums between 1910 and 1938, if the increase in aggregate operating income also corresponds to an increase in the average income per institution, nor is it clear if his figures account for changes in the dollar’s value overtime.

19 Coleman, 1:180.


21 Based on a comparison of aggregate operating incomes for 1930 and 1938. “Museum Income Last Year,” 1.

22 Coleman, Museum in America, 1:44, 2:298. Coleman’s vague wording does not indicate which twelve-month span or the source of this number.


24 Coleman, Museum in America, 2:298. One approach of the time for calculating a museum’s reach within its community was to divide the year’s total attendance by
the local population and use the resulting percentage as a measure of effectiveness. See the Charleston Museum vignette for additional details on how racism factored into these equations.

25 Coleman, 2:297–99. He does not provide numbers and, in similarly vague terms, notes that London’s national museums were also seeing “disquieting decline,” which, he thought, might be due to the automobile affording access to other attractions.

26 Coleman, 1:182.

27 Coleman, 1:9. Although Coleman made this statement with regard to art museums, the predominant and most prestigious form of museum at the time, the lesson he wished to impart had broader resonance.

28 Although Ford’s description of museums as the adopted children of their trustees conjures a tender paternalistic relationship, it is a relationship with clearly defined dominant-subordinate positions.

29 Edsel B. Ford (president, Arts Commission of the City of Detroit), “The New Public Museum from the Standpoint of a Trustee,” Museum News 18, no. 5 (September 1, 1940): 9, from a paper read at the annual meeting of the American Association of Museums in Detroit, May 22, 1940, as part of the session “The New Public Museum—an Orientation for the Years Ahead from Five Points of View.”

30 Coleman, Museum in America, 1:182.


32 Richard F. Bach, “Neighborhood Circulating Exhibitions,” Museum News 14, no. 12 (December 15, 1936): 7–8, from a paper read at the annual meeting of the American Association of Museums at New York, May 11–13, 1936. Particular effort was made to reach immigrant groups by sending word of the exhibits to the foreign-language press. By teaming with the host organizations’ educators, the museum offered study groups, classes, and lectures in conjunction with the exhibits.


34 Low, Museum as a Social Instrument, 12. John Cotton Dana is recognized for insisting that museums be made more useful to a broader public. Several of his books have been reprinted and are still in use today, including The New Museum (Woodstock, VT: Elm Tree Press, 1917).

35 Francis H. Taylor (chairman, American Alliance of Museum’s Committee on Education; director, the Metropolitan Museum of Art), foreword to Low, Museum as a Social Instrument, 3.

36 At the time AAM contracted Low to write The Museum as a Social Instrument, he had served as a part-time museum educator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, was a graduate student in art history at Harvard University, and was also pursuing adult education at Columbia University’s Teachers College. He went on to serve as director of education at the Walters Art Gallery / Walters Art Museum from 1946–80.


Coleman, *Museum in America, 2:317*. One author’s sardonic, winking piece, which touts museums’ offerings, rightly suggests that the fear of wrongly occupied time was a more a preoccupation of the classes accustomed to spare time than it was of the average worker; see Lincoln Heights Recreation Corporation, “New Leisure Will Not Catch New York Citizens Unawares: The City Is like a University, Equipped with Plants for Study and Play and Full of Occupation for Spare Time,” *New York Times*, April 15, 1934, XX9.

38 An outgrowth of the Carnegie Corporation of New York’s mission to promote “the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding,” the AAAE claimed a longer history for itself, one rooted in the democratic impulse to self-enlightenment that resulted in the Junto clubs of Benjamin Franklin’s era and the lyceum movement of the early 1800s. See, for example, Morse A. Cartwright (executive-director, American Association of Adult Education), “The History of Adult Education in the United States,” in “Adult Education for Negroes in the United States,” *Journal of Negro Education* 14, no. 3 (Summer 1945): 283–92.


40 Coleman, *Museum in America, 2:318*.


42 Adam, *Civic Value of Museums*; Thomas R. Adam, *The Museum and Popular Culture*, Studies in the Social Significance of Adult Education in the United States 14 (New York: American Association of Adult Education, 1939). Among the cited shortcomings of Adam’s first book was that he based his firsthand assessments on just a handful of institutions, all from the New York City area. He remedied this for the 1939 study by casting a wider geographical wider net, visiting more museums, and talking to more active practitioners in order to gain a fuller awareness of current trends.


46 One who outlined the possible pressures that increased reliance on municipal funding and governance might bring was Ira Edwards (director, Milwaukee Public Museum), “The New Public Museum from a Directors Viewpoint,” Museum News (September 1, 1940): 10–12, from a paper read at annual meeting of the American Association of Museums in Detroit, May 22, 1940, as part of the session “The New Public Museum—an Orientation for the Years Ahead from Five Points of View.”

47 Adam, Civic Value of Museums, vii, 20–23.

48 Adam, 50, 61.

49 Grace Fisher Ramsey, Educational Work in Museums of the United States: Development, Methods, and Trends (New York: H. W. Wilson, 1938), 18, 254. Ramsey conducted her research, which she described as involving interviews with directors and educators from more than 140 museums, between 1936 and 1938 for her doctorate, which she earned from New York University while working at AMNH.


51 The Newark Museum’s apprenticeship program, for example, began in 1925 with support from AAM, and the Buffalo Museum of Science inaugurated a sixteen-week course in 1929. Ramsey cites these as the first museum training programs to provide students grounding in museum teaching and adult education, specifically (Educational Work in Museums, 212–16). For details of the Newark Museum apprenticeship program, see Hein, Progressive Museum Practice, 69–95. In the 1920s, Bragg’s contributions to the professionalization of museum work, particularly for women, included developing and teaching a museum training at Columbia University, which ran for several summers. See Louise Anderson Allen, A Bluestocking in Charleston: The Life and Career of Laura Bragg (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 140–48.


53 Coleman, Museum in America, 2:319.

54 Coleman, 1:81–82.


“San Francisco Program to Include Day of Visits,” Museum News 17, no. 1 (May 1, 1939): 1.

“San Francisco Program.”

Exhibition Techniques, 16.


Cartwright, 12.

Bruce Altshuler, The Avant-Garde in Exhibition: New Art in the 20th Century (New York: Abrams, 1994), 136–46. Of course, Entartete Kunst (Degenerate art) had debuted earlier. It was the evident popularity of the 1937 show that increased alarm among museum professionals.


72 Bernays, 50–51.


75 This exhibition is sometimes called *America Can't Have Housing*, after an accompanying volume edited by Carol Aronovici: *America Can’t Have Housing* (New York: Committee on the Housing Exhibition by the Museum of Modern Art, 1934).


81 Coleman, 1:50.

82 History professor Lucy Maynard Salmon pioneered decades earlier the use of material culture in the college classroom and urged history museums to abandon ill-fitting scientific taxonomies in favor of chronological display schema. See Conard, “Pragmatic Roots,” 106–8.

83 Conard, 116. As others have noted, museums with self-taught as well as academically trained specialists allowed interdisciplinary minglings. See, for example, Sally Gregory Kohlstedt, “History in a Natural History Museum: George Brown Goode and the Smithsonian Institution,” *Public Historian* 10, no. 2 (1988): 7–26. Writers of the age were also aware of how anthropology, for example, was influencing historians practice: Harry Elmer Barnes, “Some Contributions of Anthropology to History,” *Journal of Social Forces* 2, no. 3 (March 1924): 362–73.


86 Fox, x.

87 See Warren Leon and Roy Rosenzweig, introduction to *History Museums in the U.S.*, xvi–xviii. Both “general” and “special” museums are categories used in *The Museum
in America, while reference to the types of special history museums extant in 1938 is found at 1:63–64.
88 Coleman, Museum in America, 1:61, 3:663.
89 Coleman, 1:62, 64–66.
90 Arthur C. Parker, “The History Museum—an Opportunity,” New York History 15, no. 3 (July 1934): 331. Parker, who sent a questionnaire to two hundred small history museums, reported that “only one out of four local museums had a paid or volunteer curator, but 70 percent of them had definite plans for the future. With county historical societies it was found that only half of them rendered any service to the schools and only half of them made any attempt at arrangement of material. Only 20 percent of these societies actually emphasized museum objects or had period rooms,” though 80 percent were active publishers of work. See Parker, “Small History Museum,” 191. For his part, Fox found the “half-trained, part-time caretaker” inadequate to “the important matter” of “how they [artifacts] are displayed.” Fox, foreword to Parker, Manual for History Museums, viii.
91 Parker, 331.
93 Parker, Manual for History Museums, 55, 64.
94 Parker, 55, 63–64 (emphasis in original).
95 Parker, 18.
97 Parker, Manual for History Museums, xv; Parker, “History Museum—an Opportunity,” 328.
99 Parker, Manual for History Museums, 114.
100 Coleman, Museum in America, 1:60.