



Defining the Modern Museum: A Case Study of the Challenges of Exchange (Cultural Spaces)

Lianne McTavish

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Defining the Modern Museum is a fascinating exploration of the museum as a cultural institution. Emphasizing museums' relationship to schools, libraries, and government agencies, this interdisciplinary study challenges long-standing assumptions about museums – revealing their messy, uncertain origins, and belying the standard narrative of their educational purpose having been corrupted by corporate goals.

Using theoretical models and extensive archival research, Lianne McTavish examines the case of Canada's oldest continuing public museum, the New Brunswick Museum in Saint John. Focusing on the period between 1842 and the 1950s, McTavish addresses topics such as the transnational exchange of objects between museums, efforts by women to claim space within the organization, the creation of Carnegie libraries, and the rising status of curators.

Shedding light on many topics of current interest, especially the commodification and globalization of museums, this study makes a lively contribution to museum studies and cultural studies.

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