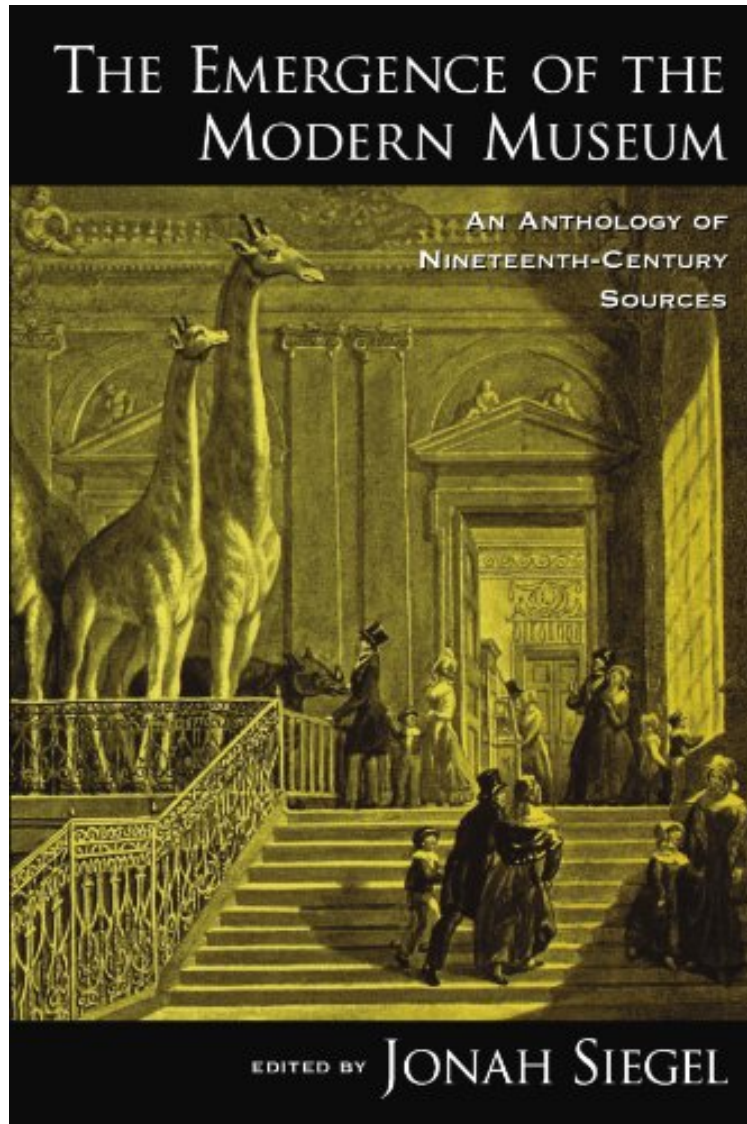


The Emergence of the Modern Museum: An Anthology of Nineteenth-Century Sources

Jonah Siegel

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The Emergence of the Modern Museum, a unique compendium of original sources, presents a detailed and dynamic account of the development of the museum and its practices in Britain during a crucial period of formation. From poignant recollections of visits to stately homes to charged debates about the acquisition of the Elgin Marbles or the establishment of an Indian Museum; from early catalogue entries describing the curiosities discovered by Captain Cook to later ones organizing human skulls according to Darwinian principles-this volume offers a representative sample of the diverse, contentious, and often moving ideas that have shaped the modern institution. With original selections, thematic organization, and insightful critical apparatus, this collection makes newly available a wide range of material, including proposals for reform laid out in parliamentary papers, essays by influential theorists and curators, and firsthand accounts of museum-going in the popular press.

"This deftly selected anthology provides striking insights into the debates about the formation of museum collections, their social mission, class address, and their relationship to the state and empire in nineteenth-century Britain. These texts, many of them previously inaccessible, reveal in vivid language the discursive and political struggles surrounding the difficult birth of the museum in the world's first industrial nation. Today's museum curators and visitors are the heirs to these controversies-many of them still unresolved."-Tim Barringer, Yale University "[This] illuminating anthology . . . provide[s] a vivid insight into the social and political forces that shaped museums as cultural venues. A valuable addition to the growing body of literature that documents the great 'Age of the Museum.'" -Brendan Moore, British Museum Magazine About the AuthorJonah Siegel Siegel is Professor of English at Rutgers University and President of the Northeast Victorian Studies Association. He is the author of Haunted Museum: Longing, Travel, and the Art-Romance Tradition and Desire Excess: The Nineteenth-Century Culture of Art.