
To the Reader

I am most pleased and honored to be able to present our American colleagues and readers with this publication, which supplies information on the state of visitor research at museums in Germany. I, like my predecessor Prof. Siegfried Rietschel, am a supporter of these studies and anticipate that in the coming years they will aid us in meeting many challenges with which museums will be confronted. The interest in museums continues, but what motivations drive the visitors?

Visitor research provides information of use not only for practical aspects of our labors, but also for securing the position of museums in the political and economic context which restricts museum work. In Germany, as it happens, this context must be redefined, and new forms of financing, administration, and proprietorship must be found. These changes should be based upon solid arguments, such as those offered by visitor research.

My special thanks go to Prof. Hans-Joachim Klein of the University of Karlsruhe, who put together this set of contributions.

I hope this issue will be given a wide distribution and generate lively interest.

Dr. Martin Roth, Dresden
President of the Deutscher Museumsbund

Introduction from the Editor of European Special Issues

Over the years *Visitor Behavior* has become the main source of communication about what is going on in visitor studies. That fact was apparent to me when I spent a sabbatical year in Europe. I found that people I met who were working in visitor studies, or at least interested in the topic, usually knew about *Visitor Behavior*, and that was true whether they were from northern, southern or middle Europe. It is appropriate, therefore, that we start with this issue an international focus by learning about visitor studies in Germany. Our thanks to Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim Klein for editing this issue which we hope will be one of a series from different parts of the world as visitor studies is truly an international undertaking. Any persons interested in helping to organize issues representing different countries should contact Steve Bitgood (Editor of *Visitor Behavior*) or myself.

Ross Loomis
Colorado State University

Editor's Preface

Hans-Joachim Klein
University of Karlsruhe

Ten years of *Visitor Behavior* are something to be proud of, such a record is not a matter of course for a specialized journal. So congratulations and thanks to Steve Bitgood and his assistants! After ten years, however, it is also time to think about "new horizons." Therefore, I heartily support the decision to start the second decade by expanding the geographic perspective. Of course, I am particularly pleased that Germany was chosen for the first issue concentrating on visitor research in a foreign country.

German museology stands upon a long tradition. This is also true of issues surrounding the public functions and visitor orientation. As early as the beginning of this century, progressive museum directors like Alfred Lichtwark and Fritz Wichert were influential in the worker education movement. Even before the First World War, an empirical study on the attendance of different social classes at art exhibitions was carried out in Mannheim; it represents true pioneer work on the public perception of art.

In the years when Edward S. Robinson and Arthur Melton were starting their trailblazing visitor studies, Germany experienced a lull not only in visitor research but in social sciences in general. After the Second World War, it understandably took longer before this area of inquiry became reestablished as an academic discipline.

The originator of the new field of museum sociology in Germany, which has existed since the 1970s, is Heiner Treinen. I am thus most pleased that he is represented in this issue by an exemplary contribution from his more recent empirical investigations. I am equally pleased over the essays by Bernhard Graf and Monika Hagedorn-Saupe on the activities of the Institut für Museumskunde in Berlin, the leading institution of its kind in Germany, and that by Hermann Schäfer on the role of evaluation in the planning process at the Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (House of History of the Federal Republic of Germany) in Bonn. I would like to thank all three for their efforts. In the case of the remaining contributions, we deliberately asked younger colleagues to report on projects in their fields.

Any selection is unavoidably arbitrary. I hope that those colleagues will forgive me whose investigations I learned of too late or did not evaluate as I should. I hope nevertheless that the projects presented here give a sufficient impression of the range of topics addressed in German visitor research and open the door for questions and new contacts.