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## **The social museum in the Caribbean : grassroots heritage initiatives and community engagement**

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Propositions to accompany the defense of *'The Social Museum in the Caribbean: Grassroots Heritage Initiatives and Community Engagement'* by Csilla E. Ariese-Vandemeulebroucke.

1. Caribbean museums are able to take on a myriad of societal roles because the variety of museums, in terms of type, ownership, content, and setting, reflects the diversity of contemporary Caribbean society.
2. In the Caribbean, grassroots museums are able to engage with communities and heritages that are excluded from governmental museums.
3. Colonialism was not only responsible for the direct development of many museums and collections in the Caribbean, but continues to impact the creation of museums today.
4. The extent and ordering of collections displayed in Caribbean grassroots museums is more akin to that seen in cabinets of curiosities than in the so-called 'modern' museum.
5. Paradoxically, the Caribbean is both highly fragmented and extremely connected. This poses difficulties as well as opportunities for museums, museum studies, and staff.
6. Ephemeral museums have a role to play in the present and do not necessarily need to be sustainable for the future.
7. Broadening the definition of 'the museum' offers opportunities to recognize heritage phenomenon that are important to communities and visitors but do not fit the Westernized stereotypical image of 'the museum.'
8. The value of museums for safeguarding, sharing, and supporting heritage cannot be underestimated. It is a grave mistake to delay the appreciation and financial support of museums until after disaster strikes and irreparable damages have been incurred.
9. Museums do not exist in isolation and benefit greatly from operating in interconnected regional or global networks.
10. Representative staff members are the best long-term solution to creating a museum that is anchored in community.
11. The pressures from academia can lead to or exacerbate mental health issues, a problem which is rarely recognized, let alone effectively tackled, in universities.
12. There is no better way to relax than by being alone with the sound of your breathing, 20 meters below the waves.