



Past Imperfect: Essays on History, Libraries, and the Humanities (Crime and Justice: A Review of Research)

Lawrence W. Towner

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Lawrence W. Towner was head of one of the country's largest independent research libraries. He was also an eloquent spokesman for the needs of scholars and institutions in the humanities. While at the Newberry Library, he built and focused its prestigious collections, pioneered in the preservation of books, and created major research centers. His efforts established the library as a community of scholars while encouraging its use by students and the general public.

Towner's essays and talks cover a broad range of topics of continuing relevance to scholarship and the humanities. His writings gathered in *Past Imperfect* are concerned with such issues as the role of independent research libraries and the politics of funding. A section of historical essays on the common people of New England reveal his concern with neglected fields of history, a theme that guided his career as a librarian. Spanning the range of his experience and expertise, this volume expresses Towner's coherent vision of the place of humanities, libraries, and scholarship in American life.

Lawrence W. Towner (1921-92) taught history at M.I.T., the College of William and Mary, and Northwestern University. In 1962 he was appointed librarian of the Newberry Library and directed the library for the next twenty-four years.

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