

Man of Parks

As Administrator of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, August Heckscher brought to the city's recreational and cultural resources the kind of urbanity and quality of mind that is scarce at the level where politics meets the arts. He leaves a job in many ways undoable. The battle against budget cuts and for maintenance of New York's parks has been, and still is, a fight against disaster; but he set his standards high.

The man who follows him, Richard M. Clurman, will find that what is involved is a struggle with administrative bureaucracy and a battle between conservationists and activists requiring a Solomon-like wisdom in selection of programs and disposition of funds. Parks are the city's greatest and most vulnerable amenity; recreational programs one of its constant needs—and threats.

Mr. Clurman might start by seeing the Olmsted shows in Washington and New York and reading the excellent book that is the New York catalogue, for a sensitive exposition of the miracle of the city's parks and what they were meant to be, stylistically and sociologically. There's much more to the job than dealing with the public's tendency to love 'em and litter 'em, as Mr. Heckscher knows.