



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

Humanities

DIVISION OF PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative and selected portions of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the NEH Division of Preservation and Access application guidelines at <http://www.neh.gov/grants/preservation/humanities-collections-and-reference-resources> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Preservation and Access staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative and selected portions, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: Illuminating New York City History: Processing, Cataloging, Digitizing, and Rehousing the Museum's Ephemera Collections

Institution: Museum of the City of New York

Project Director: Lindsay Turley

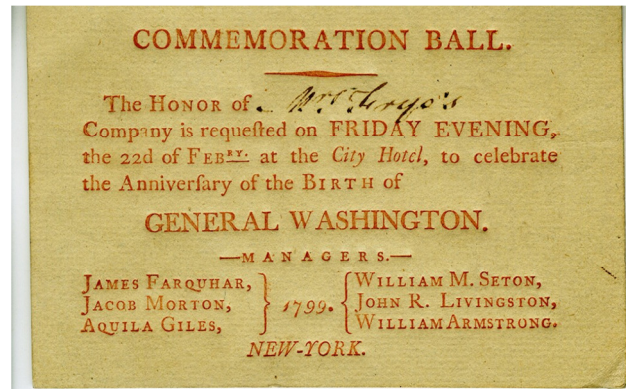
Grant Program: Humanities Collections and Reference Resources

**Illuminating New York City History through Material Culture:
A Proposal to Process, Catalog, Digitize, and Rehouse
the Ephemera Collections of the Museum of the City of New York**

PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE

The Museum of the City of New York seeks a grant of \$142,056 from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support a two-year project to improve stewardship of and increase public access to a major collection of printed and three-dimensional ephemera through archival assessment and processing, cataloging, digitization, and rehousing. This initiative will extend the useful life of these holdings for research, exhibition, and public programming. Containing over 7,200 objects of material culture, the Museum's Ephemera Collections include advertisements, handbills, pamphlets, menus, invitations, medals, pins, buttons, badges, three-dimensional souvenirs, and printed textiles, such as ribbons and sashes. These objects—the minor and transient documents and souvenirs of everyday life—provide visual and material insight into New Yorkers' engagement with the social, creative, civic, political, and physical dynamics of the city, from the Colonial era to the present day.

The City Museum's Ephemera Collections are a treasure trove of tangible and eloquent, but often humble items that survive from a vast range of events and organizations over the course of more than two hundred years. There is extensive documentation of public events, including civic celebrations—parades, ceremonies, presentations, dinners, and balls—to commemorate important occasions in the life of the city, such as the openings of the Brooklyn Bridge, the Statue of Liberty, and the subway system; national events, such as a ceremony to mourn the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln (1865); and observances such as the centennial of George Washington's inauguration (1889), the Hudson-Fulton Celebration on the 300th anniversary of Henry Hudson's voyage to New York (1909), or the 25th anniversary of the consolidation of the five boroughs (1924). Other celebrations honor important individuals, such as a ball to mark George Washington's birthday in 1799 (see image at right) and a Mayor's Reception for General Douglas MacArthur in 1951. (Please see Appendix B for images of selected items referenced without images in the narrative.)



In addition to such “official” occasions, these materials capture a diverse array of political, cultural, and social events—both public and private, high and low—including political protests and demonstrations on topics from woman suffrage to the AIDS epidemic; commercial entertainments, from the city's early 20th-century amusements parks to 1970s discos; and social occasions ranging from an invitation to the home of “the” Mrs. Astor (1881), to a notice for the Irving Club Calico Hop (1871). The ephemera also represent professional and fraternal organizations large and small, as disparate as the Women's Press Club, the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the Irish Emigrant Society, as well as political organizations and reform groups ranging from the Republic Sound Money Club (1896) to Tammany Hall to the West Flushing Society of the Cadets of Temperance.

These materials have a special value to scholars, curators, and students of New York City history and the American urban experience, because they capture the history of events, organizations, and individuals in a highly specific and physical way. True to the notion of the ephemeral, the items in the collection originally were intended to have a fleeting lifespan and, in most cases, pass between people with little fanfare. Because of this very ordinary nature, these objects of immediate communication served as a connective tissue between

citizens and their city, organizations and their members, and populations and the social geography of daily life. Ephemeral items transport both scholarly researchers and the general public to the level of the familiar, the forgotten, and, at times, the marginalized.

As noted typography scholar Michael Twyman has argued, ephemera frequently convey the spirit of an event through their graphic style and language as well as through their literal content, and they provide details that more traditional museum collections can only hint at. And in many instances, a handbill or advertisement may be the only physical record of a group, event, or movement. Moreover, because ephemeral materials were originally intended to be transient, they have often not been collected in museums or libraries in large numbers, and historical examples of many objects are now relatively scarce. For these reasons, the City Museum is committed to making its extensive Ephemera Collections accessible to a broad audience for research, study, and enjoyment.

Ephemeral materials can be read for a wide variety of information, some explicit and some more subtly embedded. For example, trade cards, invitations, and advertisements frequently contain addresses that enable an understanding of commercial geography and an ability to map businesses and social events. Fliers promoting demonstrations or protests provide a record of social activism by grassroots organizations, from tracing the evolution of well-known groups to documenting those that may have had only a spontaneous and fleeting existence, yet hold a strong connection to larger historical movements. Mementos from parades and commemorative events document the groups and individuals involved, as well as, in the aggregate, the larger social importance of such celebrations as sites of public gathering and civic culture. Handbills and notices from city agencies reflect how government sought to shape urban life and how the contested issues of the day, such as sanitation and public safety, were addressed to the public.



Woman suffrage pennant from the Women's Political Union, which was founded in 1907 by Harriet Eaton Stanton Blatch, daughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

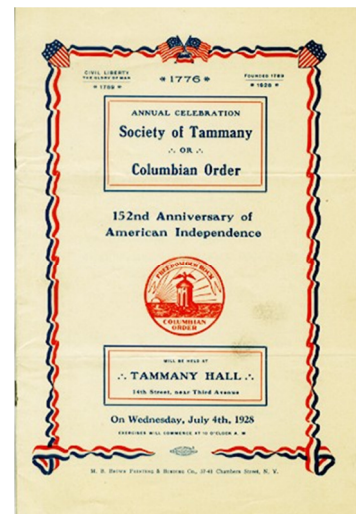
In a more global sense, ephemera comprise key forms of commercial culture, and graphic arts often reflect the visual styles and modes of communication of a historical era. Likewise, materials that contain embedded advertisements inform our understanding of how the different audiences for public and civic events were understood and targeted. Finally, all ephemera reflect ordinary human experience. As everyday items that were handled by individuals and that have contemporary iterations and parallels, items of ephemera are both relatable and revelatory, familiar and foreign. Ephemera have the potential to unlock information that lends itself to multiple interpretations.

Scholars have long recognized the importance of ephemera as a unique and valuable source material for their research. For example, Bernard Bailyn's Pulitzer-Prize winning *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (1967) relies almost entirely on political pamphlets that were published between 1750 and 1776. This seminal study illustrates the potential value of ephemeral objects in shaping the way that historians and students alike understand crucial eras of American history. Over the last 20 years, ephemera have also become increasingly essential in reporting underrepresented histories. Several influential scholarly monographs illustrate the value of ephemera in documenting social history, women's history, and gay history. In the celebrated study *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City During the Nineteenth Century* (1998), Mary Ryan not only utilizes invitations and programs from civic gatherings, she also demonstrates the larger significance of such gatherings to urban democracy, social relationships and the nature of public space.

Similarly, in *Parlor Politics: In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government* (2000), Catherine Allgor turns to social invitations and calling cards to narrate the ways in which politicians' wives in the early American Republic influenced politics through their keen manipulation of Washington social events; political alliances could be made and dissolved, Allgor argues, through the arrival or absence of a party invitation. In his groundbreaking book *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (1995), George Chauncey relies on handbills, unpublished investigations, and scrapbooks, among other sources, to map the geography of gay life in New York at the brink of modernity.

Along with historians, cultural theorists and literary scholars have turned to ephemera to add dimension to their inquiries. In *Notes from Underground: Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture* (2008) Stephen Duncombe examines hand-produced and irregularly distributed "zines" as primary disseminators of grassroots, activist ideology in 1990s New York. Meanwhile, ruminating over the significance of "found objects," including ticket stubs, marginalia, and concert programs in Walter Benjamin's "Passagen-Werk," Susan Buck-Morss suggests that Benjamin's collection of the "debris of mass culture" could, in fact be "a source of philosophical truth." (Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*, 1995) Researching ephemeral materials while armed with a variety of disciplinary questions, these scholars have found that the items cataloged as "ephemera" add detail, depth, and perspective that no other sources do as well. In many instances these "forgotten" materials give voice to those who have themselves been forgotten.

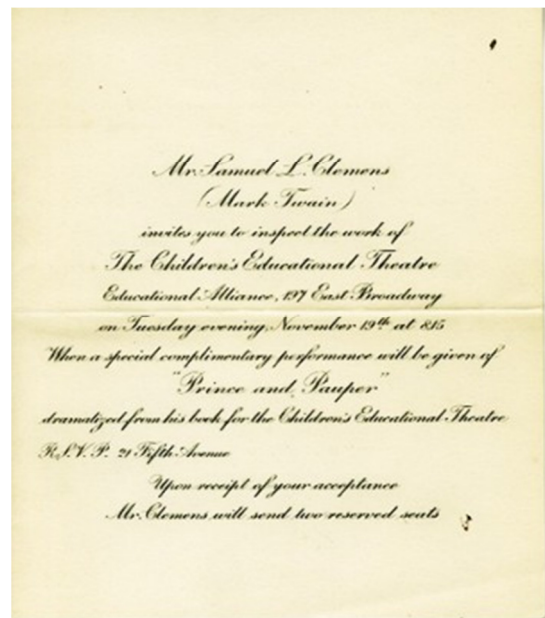
Ephemera are also useful to students at the high school and university levels, who are being taught that the ability to read and interpret primary-source materials is essential to the study of history and other humanities disciplines. Rigorous standardized exams reflect the increasing importance of these materials in pedagogical practice; for example, in both the national Advanced Placement Exam and the New York State Regents Exam for U.S. History, students are asked to answer document-based questions, which often relate to a piece of ephemera, such as a commercial advertisement or a political flier, like the 1928 Tammany Hall Fourth of July party notice at right from the Museum's collection. This emphasis on evaluating and contextualizing primary-source materials is being carried into the university classroom as a means of strengthening students' skills in critical thinking and independent analysis, which are necessary first steps toward conducting original research.



In recognition of the potential that ephemeral materials hold for scholarly and study, cultural organizations, historical repositories, and institutions of higher learning across the U.S. are beginning to make such collections widely available to the public through digitization and on-line hosting. For example, the Library of Congress has digitized more than 17,000 items from [An American Time Capsule: Three Centuries of Broadsides and Other Printed Ephemera](#), a collection comprising primary-source materials—advertisements, blank forms, programs, election tickets, catalogs, clippings, timetables, and menus—that capture the everyday activities of ordinary people who participated in the growth of the nation from the American Revolution to the present day. The University of California has also incorporated ephemera into the [Online Archive of California](#), a collection of 200,000 digitized photographs, documents, newspaper pages, political cartoons, works of art, diaries, oral histories, advertisements, and other cultural artifacts that reveal California's diverse history and culture. Smaller and more thematically focused ephemera digitization projects include [Duke University's Ad*Access](#) project, which presents images and metadata for 7,000 advertisements printed in American newspapers and magazines between 1911-1955; the Free Library of Philadelphia's 1,600-object [Centennial Exhibition](#)

[Digital Collection](#) and [The 19th-Century American Trade Card](#) project at Harvard University's Baker Library, which has made accessible over 1,000 trade cards that are representative of the genre.

Enabling digital access to the Museum of the City of New York's Ephemera Collections will provide a similarly significant contribution to the online universe of free, publicly accessible, primary-source research materials. The Museum is the only institution dedicated to celebrating and illuminating the past, present, and future of the country's most populous, diverse, and iconic city. In this role, we are committed to representing and interpreting New York's diverse economic, social, political, and cultural heritage through vast holdings in prints and photographs, paintings and sculpture, decorative arts, theater, costume, and manuscripts and ephemera. Providing a worthy companion to the Museum's more traditional holdings, the Ephemera Collections are thematically specialized and of research-level quality. From dinner menus and social invitations to ticket stubs, trade cards, and souvenirs, these objects provide essential documentation of everyday life in New York City from the Colonial era to the present. They have been frequently used in history exhibitions, thematic publications, and general research—all of which benefit scholarship, education, public programming, and lifelong learning in the humanities.



Invitation from Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) to a performance on behalf of the Children's Educational Theatre, 1907.

The City Museum's Ephemera Collections lack comprehensive cataloging, which obstructs both internal and external use. Basic placeholder catalog records without searchable metadata exist for approximately 3,700 ephemera objects, while 1,850 objects have no catalog record at all; as a result, accessing ephemera typically requires a time-consuming search through numerous boxes of material. Cataloging all of these objects and digitizing the vast majority will expand and promote their use in humanities scholarship and education, while making them publicly accessible online will ensure that the Ephemera Collections may serve these roles, freely and openly, for people throughout the nation and around the world. At the same time, rehousing the physical objects will extend their useful life for study and display.

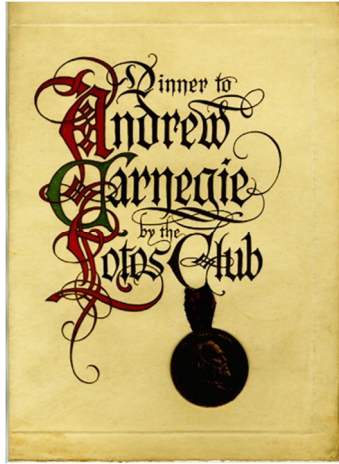
If awarded NEH funding, the City Museum is well positioned to facilitate web access to its Ephemera Collections through an existing online database. In 2010, the Museum launched a user-friendly, searchable Collections Portal at collections.mcnyc.org, where visitors can now view and study high-resolution images and catalog information for over 135,000 objects, including historic photographs, prints, drawings, and maps—most of which have never before been publicly available. (Please see Appendix C for screenshots of the Collections Portal.) Since its unveiling, 406,431 visitors from 180 countries have viewed more than 4.3 million Collections Portal pages. The goal of the digitization process is to enable public access to all 750,000 objects in the Museum's diverse collections. The Museum finalized the construction of an on-site digital laboratory to support this key institutional priority in 2011.

Nature and Size of Ephemera Collections, and Selection Criteria for Inclusion in Project

The proposed project will address the Museum's 45 artificially created Ephemera Collections, which have been thematically arranged and assembled over time by staff according to their subject or object type, rather than according to provenance. The collections cover a variety of topics, from Advertisements, to Balls and

Excursions, to Public Ceremonies, to Transportation and the two World Wars. (Please see Appendix A for a list of subjects and box counts associated with each subject.)

The City Museum obtained these materials through several channels: many were donated as part of larger gifts that included what were seen at the time as more significant objects, such as furniture and fine art; individuals donated ephemera saved by family members over the years; private collectors donated ephemera



Souvenir menu for a dinner held in honor of Andrew Carnegie by the Lotos Club, 1909.

that they had purposefully acquired; and some objects were obtained through purchase. The diverse donor base and disparate methods of acquisition mean that the Museum's Ephemera Collections represent a broader swath of the population than might be captured through a discrete collection amassed by a single individual.

The Ephemera Collections are dispersed across 97 boxes and 23 oversize drawers within the Museum's climate controlled curatorial center. Materials comprise a variety of formats/object types, and are primarily composed of printed materials on paper, including handbills, pamphlets, menus, and invitations (70%); three-dimensional objects, such as medals, pins, and souvenirs (25%); and printed textiles, such as ribbons and sashes (5%). In terms of object dates, approximately 5% of materials date to the 18th century, 20% to the first half of the 19th century, 40% to the second half of the 19th century, 25% to the first half of the 20th century, and 10% to the second half of the 20th century.

Selection Criteria: The Ephemera Collections function as a conceptual subset of the Museum's collection, and, while not a series in the strict archival sense, comprise a group of intellectually interrelated and definable materials, assembled with the aim of gathering materials that document the political, civic, and social customs and practices of New Yorkers. The goal of the proposed project is to eschew a "cherry-picking" approach to the materials, and instead to endeavor to take a comprehensive approach to create digital surrogates of the full sweep of the collection. Ensuring that the ephemeral materials are discoverable and visually accessible will save objects from future unnecessary hands-on consultation merely for visual content. This approach has the added benefit of assuring researchers that their digital access to a particular, specifically defined component of the Museum's collections is not limited by editorial omissions or subjective curatorial selection.

This approach will be strengthened, however, by a judicious review of the material to be digitized during processing. Objects falling within the following categories will be excluded from digitization:

- Exact duplicates of the same object.
- Excessive redundancies within groups of similar materials where a few examples are representative of dozens of only slightly varied objects. Examples include trolley tickets for the same route, where the only variation is the number of the ticket, and multiple invitations to the same ball, where the only discrepancy is the addressee.
- Objects not of museum quality. Examples include items damaged beyond conservation, or facsimiles created from original objects.
- Objects unrelated to New York City that were misfiled with the Ephemera Collections by mistake.

As Project Director, the Museum's Manuscripts and Ephemera Archivist, Lindsay Turley, will carry out the assessment of the Ephemera Collections in consultation with one of the Museum's Andrew W. Mellon Post-Doctoral Curatorial Fellows; this process will ensure that objects which initially appear to be duplicates or redundancies do not hold unrealized significance. Additionally, they will assess whether some items do not

merit continued stewardship by the Museum. Ms. Turley's initial survey of the ephemera indicates that this review will reduce the total number of objects digitized by about 15%, so that the 6,500 objects addressed in this project will yield approximately 5,600 new digitized records for upload to the Collections Portal (700 badges and buttons from the entire Ephemera Collection of 7,200 objects are already available online).

Any duplicates and redundancies will be retained with archival status and will be cataloged by student interns so that the Museum has preservation copies, reference copies, and copies for loans; objects not considered of museum quality or unrelated to New York City will be proposed for deaccession. The Ephemera Collections include some documents and manuscript material that have been mixed in with the ephemera based on the subject relevancy; these materials will not be digitized at this time, but will be retained in the collection and considered for future digitization opportunities.

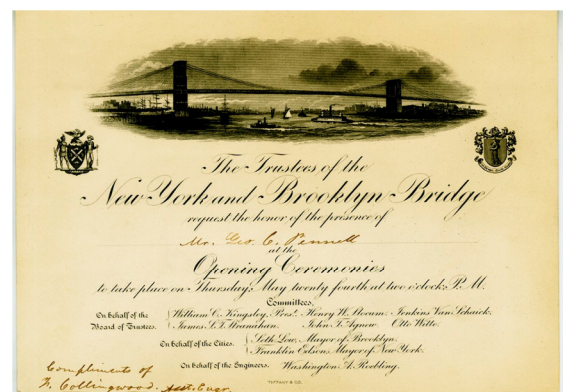
Significance for the Humanities

All materials in the Ephemera Collections support the mission of the Museum, which celebrates and interprets the city, educating the public about its distinctive character, especially its heritage of diversity, opportunity, and perpetual transformation. Founded in 1923, the Museum connects the past, present, and future of New York City. We serve the people of New York and visitors from around the world through exhibitions, school and public programs, publications, and collections.

As a history museum concerned principally with meanings, narratives, and associations, rather than an art museum concerned with aesthetics, the City Museum stewards materials and artifacts that are germane to several areas of humanities study. The Ephemera Collections offer curators, scholars, students, artists, filmmakers, planners, journalists, and many other working professionals, along with the general public, the opportunity to explore and interpret many aspects of the city's history, and to further investigate how the city's residents have organized and positioned themselves amid fluid and changing social strata. These materials reflect the changing nature of civic, social, financial, and cultural engagement for the city and its citizens over the last three centuries. They offer a richly textured portrait of the urban experience, and provide valuable material for exploring key drivers of social and cultural change over the last three centuries, including immigration, mass production, new technologies, the changing nature of class relations, and the construction of new urban identities. Within these conversations, the Ephemera Collections speak with particular force to several interrelated thematic concentrations:

Transportation and infrastructure: Many of the Museum's ephemera materials relate to the openings of new bridges, subways, and canals. For example, ephemera objects related to the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge on May 24, 1883 include an invitation for a "Reception hosted by the City of Brooklyn, for the Governor of the State of New York, and the President of the United States;" a program of "Opening Ceremonies of the New York and Brooklyn Bridge;" an admission ticket for opening ceremonies; and a small wooden relief of the Bridge distributed as a souvenir by Lord & Taylor, bearing facts about the structure on the verso.

As the Brooklyn Bridge example makes clear, not only does ephemera illuminate frequently overlooked occasions, but it also deepens awareness of familiar events, such as through the invitation at right from "The Trustees of the New York and Brooklyn Bridge" to attend the Bridge's opening ceremonies. Engraved by Tiffany & Co. and smartly designed with handsome illustrations and an elegant font style, this formal invitation reflects the pomp and circumstance of the ceremony, listing the dignitaries of the cities of New York and Brooklyn.



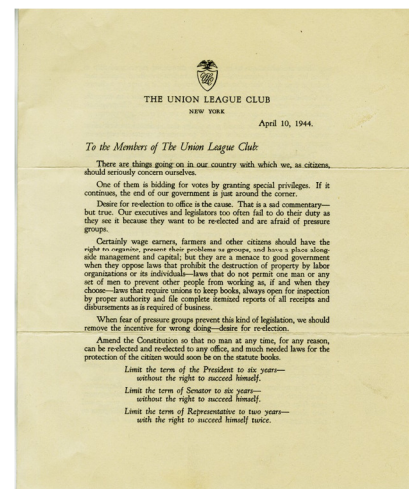
The political life of the city: The collection holds objects that speak to the political culture of the city, documenting activity from New York's notorious and influential political machines. For example, a flier promoting the Society of Tammany's annual Fourth of July celebration in 1928 (see image on page 3) uses patriotic phrasing and imagery to cast Tammany as the heir to the revolutionaries who achieved American independence. Many objects document New York-based candidates for national office, and thus focus on broader national concerns, such as a handbill promoting the Independent Greenback Party's 1876 presidential ticket, which was headed by the industrialist and philanthropist Peter Cooper (below). This currency-shaped document features the motto "three dollars" from "The Bank of Bread" emblazoned over a tableau of working-class figures, and warns against "National Banks, Untamed Bondholders and Monopolists." Humanities researchers would find ephemera like this valuable for the way in which it demonstrates the role of both images and text in evoking the viewer's economic fears and aspirations, and the power of economic motivations to influence political action.

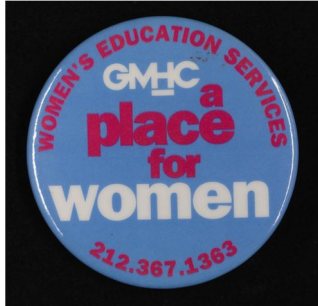


The Ephemera Collection documents political groups at both ends of the political spectrum. One of the most recent additions to the collection is a press badge from the 2004 Republican National Convention (see image on page 13). As another example, the Museum holds a flier for a 1925 costume ball (see image on page 16) on behalf of *The Road to Freedom*, the only nationally distributed English-language anarchist periodical of its kind in the 1920s. This advertisement demonstrates how such events served as social gatherings for a dispersed community of anarchists, as well as fundraisers for the magazine and its cause, and it represents as a useful primary source for studies into social organizing among anarchists during this time period. The illustration—an image of two women dancing together—provides insight into the sexual politics of the 1920s and could be valuable to scholars of gender and sexuality.

The changing nature of reform: The Museum holds extensive material documenting social activism and reform movements, particularly from the last half of the 19th century to the last half of the 20th century. During this period, New Yorkers across social classes assembled to organize reform groups and charities, which are represented in the collection by invitations and programs from meetings and fundraising events, and by pamphlets such as the constitution and bylaws of the West Flushing Section of the Cadets of Temperance (1871). By the time the Progressive Era was in full swing, the collection provides clues into the ways in which clubs and societies of that period were oriented toward a greater awareness of current events and the betterment of society for all, through items like a program from the Women's Press Club in 1903 (see image on page 11) and an invitation to the Municipal Arts Society's 1928 lecture, "Plans for the Physical Improvement of New York City."

Conversely, a 1944 pamphlet from the Union League Club (at right) illustrates the conservative concern about the increasing influence of labor unions during the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Though liberalism was the dominant political philosophy during this period of American history, this open letter to members of a powerful New York social club illustrates a burgeoning conservatism that would flourish in the next several decades. Like ephemera associated with participation in civic life, these materials open up a conversation for scholars on New York's role as the epicenter for many national reform movements.





Ephemera from later in the 20th century also provides important documentation for trends in social activism and engagement, such as through pins and programs promoting AIDS Walk New York events coordinated by the organization Gay Men’s Health Crisis in the 1990s. With pins produced in English and Spanish, as well as materials promoting health services and health education for women, the AIDS Walk materials are notable for the way in which they document the broadening circle of outreach for public health messages surrounding this disease. These objects would be of particular interest to researchers studying the intersection of social reform and public health.

Social habits and social order. The City Museum’s Ephemera Collection is rich in evidence of New Yorkers’ social habits, particularly materials from clubs organized around leisure for the upper classes, which proliferated in the last half of the 19th century. The ephemera such clubs left behind clearly delineated their members’ interests and place in society. For example, the souvenir menu (see image on page 5) from a 1909 dinner held in honor of Andrew Carnegie by the Lotos Club, one of the oldest literary clubs in the U.S., is lavishly illustrated with quotations from Samuel Johnson, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and John Greenleaf Whittier—authors reflecting the refined tastes and creative bent of the attendees, who would have included the city’s leading scholars, artists, collectors, writers, and journalists. Researchers may examine ephemera from organizations like this one, as well as sport-based groups like New York Yacht Club and the Coaching Club, to document how such clubs furthered a spirit of camaraderie within their membership, reinforcing an individual’s social status based on what clubs he belonged to and which ones barred him from entry. These materials provide vital evidence of early forms of social and professional networking, documenting how such organizations helped their members to get ahead in business and in society, and reflected the underlying political biases and business concerns of the individuals involved.

The Museum also stewards objects documenting the social lives of working-class and immigrant New Yorkers. For example, an invitation from 1878 (see image on page 14) invites the bearer to accompany the Executive Committee of the Irish Emigrant Society on its “annual visit of inspection” to the immigration facilities on Ward’s Island in New York Harbor and at Castle Garden, better known today as Castle Clinton National Monument. By documenting a government-led tour of America’s early immigration centers to ensure that conditions for new arrivals were safe and sanitary, the invitation demonstrates for humanities researchers the type of social mission and civic engagement that motivated the formation of immigrant societies, and provides important information about the organizational and institutional underpinnings of the lives of these communities, and the ways in which they challenged or cooperated with official bodies.

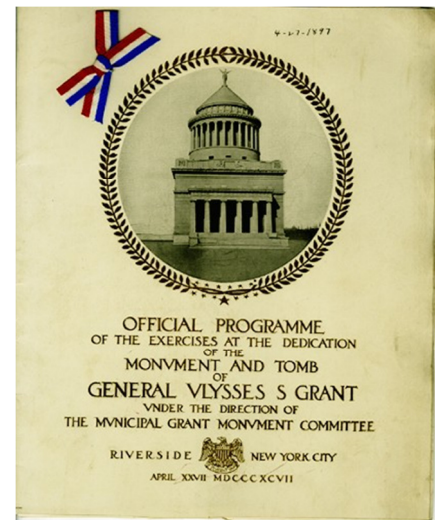
A contemporary example is a ticket to the 1998 Crowning of Miss Trinidad & Tobago, which records a significant event in the cultural life of one of New York’s many immigrant communities and reflects the rising prominence of West Indian groups in the later decades of the 20th century. It also speaks to the ever-present ritual of the beauty pageant—a topic that has received extensive scholarly attention in the field of women’s history—though notably in this case as a means of promoting cultural identity among women of color within an adopted city. Such materials present an invaluable record of social identity for groups, movements, or events that are frequently otherwise unrecorded or underrepresented in the Museum collection. Enabling public access to these ephemera materials would bolster future research into working-class and immigrant social history.



The intersection of public and private life: Ephemera materials open up scholarship examining the intersection between public and private life for city residents at different socio-economic levels. Within New York society, while “private” events like weddings and parties were certainly exclusive, it was rare that they were not also publicly observed in some way by the general citizenry, even if spectators could do little more than watch carriages pull up to the churches or grand mansions. Humanities researchers will be interested to see how these activities and the ephemera objects they generated served to establish and maintain the social order. For example, the City Museum holds an engraved invitation to the marriage of Miss Cornelia Bradley-Martin to the Earl of Craven in 1893, which features a handwritten note at the bottom requesting that the recipients, Mr. and Mrs. Meyers, “Please show this at the church” (see image on page 17). The invitation served as a de facto ticket of admission to the nuptials, demonstrating the hosts’ concern that *hoi polloi* might attempt to enter uninvited. The exclusivity of such events promoted public fascination with the elite, giving the working classes a tantalizing glimpse of how the “upper half” lives.

The evolution of national and civic identity: Ephemera objects in the Museum’s collection document the importance of civic events in the construction of the city’s and nation’s identity. For example, a ticket to the 1883 “Celebration of the Evacuation of New York by the British,” which marked the centennial of the British army’s flight from the city during the Revolutionary War, demonstrates how such occasions promoted a sense of historical memory and civic pride (see image on page 15). An illustration at the top depicts an American soldier holding a musket and dressed in a nondescript jacket and breeches, and a Native American warrior with bow and arrows dressed in a loincloth, with each figure supporting one side of a shield with an eagle perched atop. The rough dress of these freedom fighters would have reinforced ticketholders’ notions of what it means to be an American by evoking a sharp contrast to the elegance and precision of British military uniforms, and reminded the Celebration’s attendees of New York’s pivotal role in the Revolutionary War.

The collection also holds ephemera celebrating the opening of major cultural institutions and collective markers, such as The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Statue of Liberty, and Grant’s Tomb, documented through invitations and programs for public and private events sponsored by municipal offices, professional groups such as the American Society of Engineers and the Grand Army of the Republic, and independent committees. For example, the Museum has an official program from the dedication of the Monument and Tomb of General Ulysses S. Grant in 1897 (see right), held by the Municipal Grant Monument Committee, which lists the order of the ceremonies and the names of committee members. In addition to documenting the symbolic functions of monuments and New York’s built environment more generally, ephemera like this is rich with untapped meaning for scholars exploring the extent to which embrace of civic duty established or reinforced an individual’s place in the social hierarchy.



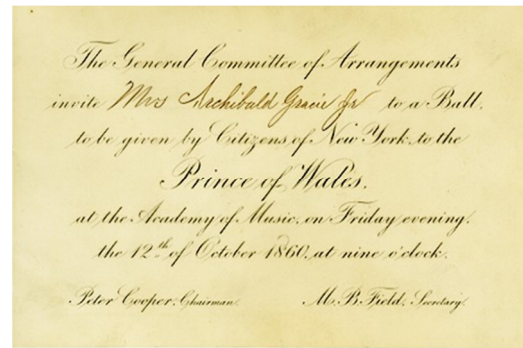
Related Collections

The City Museum's diverse collections provide an interdisciplinary, cross-media resource for interpreting and exhibiting many aspects of New York history and social order. The Ephemera Collections complement the Museum’s iconographic collections, which literally picture New York and its citizens in paintings, prints, posters, maps, and photographs dating from the Colonial era to the present. For example, as a result of a 2011 NEH Humanities Collections and Reference Resources grant to support the *Selective Conservation and Complete Digitization and Web Delivery of 1,578 Paintings and Works on Paper in the J. Clarence Davies Collection of New York Cityana: Visual Documentary Materials Depicting the Five Boroughs of the City of New York, ca. 1626 to 1932*, over the last two years, the City Museum has enabled web access to more than one-

third of the 5,000 objects included in a 1929 gift from J. Clarence Davies, one of our most important founding donations. Approximately 10% of the ephemera objects now proposed for digitization under this project were acquired from Davies. Making these materials accessible online will complement the 1,700 Davies Collection works on paper that have recently been added to the Museum's Collections Portal. For example, in viewing Bernhardt Wall's drawing [Washington Square Arch](#) (1918), which depicts the iconic structure, the public would benefit from access to a printed program for the "Ceremonies of the Laying of the Corner Stone of the Washington Memorial Arch" in 1890, which adds valuable historical context by detailing events surrounding its inauguration.

In the Museum's Photography Collection, complementary material can be found in photos by the Byron Company, a commercial photography studio that documented New York life from the late 1890s through the early 1920s, including luxurious steamships, theater performances, and civic events such as the [wedding of Consuelo Vanderbilt to the Duke of Marlborough in 1895](#); the nine images of this event currently on the Collections Portal would be enriched by the addition of a printed invitation in the Ephemera Collection (see image on page 18). At the other end of the socioeconomic spectrum, the Museum holds the photography archive of Jacob A. Riis, the pioneering social documentarian who wrote *How the Other Half Lives* (1890), and who used images of poverty and tenement life to instigate social reform. Among other topics, Riis [documented conditions in the Lower East Side's public schools](#), for which the Ephemera Collection holds report cards and awards of merit, shedding light on the academic and social activities that went on despite difficult economic conditions.

Materials in the Ephemera Collections also complement the Museum's Costume Collection, including 119 garments designed by couturiers Charles Frederick Worth (1825-1895) and Mainbocher (Main Rousseau Bocher, 1891-1976), which are presented as part of an online exhibition, [Worth/Mainbocher: Demystifying the Haute Couture](#). Many of the costumes featured in the exhibition, such as [Sarah Diodoti Gardiner's gown](#) for the Prince of Wales Ball in 1860, would have been worn to events that are well documented in the Ephemera Collection through invitations, menus, and admission cards (see example at right). Similar connections can be drawn with the Museum's Furniture and Decorative Arts Collection, which is not yet on the Collections Portal; it includes fine examples of late 19th-century furniture designed by leading New York cabinetmakers such as Leon Marcotte, Herter Brothers, and Auguste Pottier, for whom the Ephemera Collections hold supporting trade cards and catalogs.



The Museum's Ephemera Collections have the potential to complement holdings of American ephemera already shared digitally by other institutions, while adding a much greater range and depth of documentation about New York City life in particular. As described on page 3, ephemeral materials currently available online at repositories across the U.S. tend to document national history, but even those materials held by other institutions in New York also tend to have a broad geographic scope. For example, the New York Public Library hosts several collections of digitized ephemeral materials online, including several thousand [cigarette cards](#) from before 1900 to the mid-20th century; hundreds of pages of [motor vehicle manufacturers' catalogs](#) from 1909, the first decade of the automobile industry; and a collection of [menus](#), dating from 1851 to 1930.

The New-York Historical Society's ephemera collections include lottery tickets, trade cards, tobacco labels, and theater playbills, but the bulk of these materials are not available online. The Society also holds 18,000 broadsides from the late-17th through the 21st centuries, including advertisements for products, services and

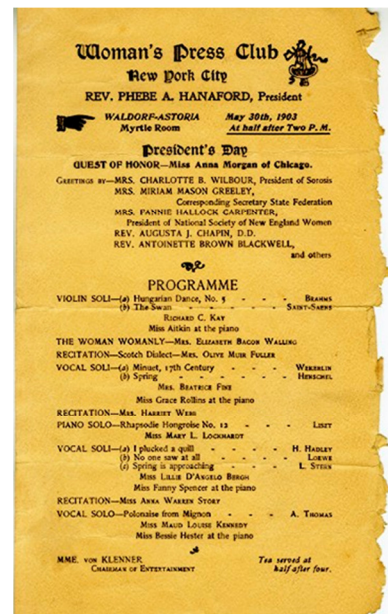
entertainments property sales, political campaigns, warnings about epidemics, and song lyrics and poetry; while metadata for the broadsides is included in the Society's [online library catalog](#), this information does not include images. The Society's collection of 10,000 American dining menus has descriptive information available via an on-site database, but information is not available online, and images have not been digitized.

Finally, the Tamiment Library at New York University is home to more than one million items of printed ephemera, dating from the late 1800s to the present, which represent the published works of organizations and trade unions prominent in the history of American labor and the left. With a grant from the NEH, the material has been arranged into 42 archival collections. [Finding aids](#) are available through the Library's website, but only 36 [images](#) from this graphically rich archive are hosted online, without metadata.

Actual and Anticipated Use of the Collection—Audience(s), Evidence, and Examples of Outcomes

The Manuscripts and Reference Archivist received over 200 research inquiries related to the Museum's Ephemera Collections in 2012, despite their minimal representation on the Collections Portal and the lack of online finding aids. A sampling of recent external researchers and their topics includes:

- Trade cards: curator, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City
- Biography of Elbridge T. Gerry, including research on relations from the Livingston and Golet families: Gilder Lehrman Fellow, New-York Historical Society, New York City
- Baseball ephemera: curator, National Museum of American Jewish History, Philadelphia, PA
- Women's clubs: artist's fellow, Museum of Modern Art, New York City
- Settlement houses: Ph.D. candidate, University of California, Berkeley
- Programs from motion picture palaces and storefront theaters: graduate student, University of Central Florida
- Society weddings: journalist, *New York Magazine*
- Menu collection: catering company, New York City



Program of a meeting of the Women's Press Club of New York City, May 30, 1903.

The City Museum anticipates that external research demand for the Ephemera Collections will significantly increase once they have been fully cataloged, digitized, and added to the Collections Portal. Once these materials are made available online, the Museum will continue to facilitate on-site access to the physical object for researchers with a demonstrated need to better understand the visual and physical nature of an object, from graphics and illustrations, to the typeface and material on which the object is printed. Museum curators regularly draw on the Ephemera Collections for exhibitions, which serve nearly 250,000 visitors each year.

A current special exhibition, *A Beautiful Way to Go: New York's Green-Wood Cemetery* (on view through October 2013), utilizes visitor admission cards and two small guidebooks with fold-out maps of the cemetery. *Activist New York*, on ongoing exhibition in the Museum's Puffin Foundation Gallery, exhibits pennants and pamphlets from the woman suffrage movement, programs from AIDS awareness events, and activist buttons from the last 75 years. From December 2012 to March 2013, the City Museum presentation of *Designing Tomorrow: America's World's Fairs of the 1930s* featured ephemera objects from our rich collections from the 1939/40 New York World's Fair. *Capital of Capital: New York Banks and the Creation of a Global Economy*, on view at the Museum from May to October 2012, featured pages from a scrapbook compiled by

the East River Savings Bank, colonial and early New York City currency, and a pamphlet published by the New York Clearing House.

The ephemera collections are also an important resource for City Museum curators working on a major core exhibition that will be installed in newly renovated galleries following the completion of the Museum's three-phase *Modernization and Expansion Project* in 2015. The core exhibition provides an important opportunity for the Museum to influence the interpretation of New York City's complex and vibrant history. This installation will seek to creatively demonstrate to visitors that the past is alive within the present, and that the city through which we move today is a kind of portal to the people and forces that have shaped it over the last four centuries. Visitors will be greeted by a flexible, highly interactive space that uses technology to introduce visitors to New York's history through the lens of the current city, using maps and images of objects from the collection that enable the audience to "peel away" the layers of history. This introductory space will be flanked by galleries that approach the city's history both chronologically and thematically. Long awaited by the scholarly community and the public, the core exhibition will provide for the first time a single place where New Yorkers and visitors from around the world can experience an overview of the city's development.

Ephemera materials are often featured in City Museum publications. For example, *Gilded Age New York: Fashion Design and Society* (Monacelli, 2013) will accompany an exhibition of the same name opening in November 2013 and utilizes invitations and dance cards from the Ephemera Collections. As a result of the popularity of *Capital of Capital* in 2012, the Museum is producing a companion book by the same name (Columbia University Press, 2014), which will include images of Breevoort Savings Bank playing cards, ca.



British colonial scrip, 1771.

1954; an excerpt from a pamphlet distributed by the New York Clearing House, 1905; and several examples of private scrip (see example at left). *New York: The Story of a Great City* (Andre Deutsch, 2011) features unique facsimile reproductions of official score book from the New York Ball Club and an invitation to attend the opening of a new building at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, among others. *New York 400: A Visual History of America's Greatest City* (Running Press, 2009), is illustrated almost exclusively with images of objects from the Museum's collections, and draws on ephemera items such as the first subway ticket sold and membership cards to speakeasies.

Ephemera objects have also been used to support the Museum's Frederick A.O. Schwarz Children's Center, which serves nearly 40,000 students and teachers each year through standards-based field trips and out-of-school time programs for grades pre-K -12, as well as professional development workshops. The Museum created a [downloadable resource guide](#) for teachers, which contains step-by-step instructions for educators on how to use the Collections Portal, ideas for engaging students with it, and two lesson plans for utilizing it in the classroom. Every educator workshop also includes a session linking the lesson's content with relevant objects available on the Portal. The proposed project to catalog and digitize ephemera will vastly expand the pool of primary-source teaching resources the City Museum is able to extend to available to educators, both during on-site programs and via the web.

HISTORY, SCOPE, AND DURATION OF PROJECT

Institutional Context

Unique in its position as an interpreter of the city and its multi-faceted history, the Museum illuminates the city's distinctive character, especially its heritage of diversity, opportunity, and perpetual transformation. We have welcomed visitors to a landmark building in East Harlem on Fifth Avenue's Museum Mile since 1932. Today, the Museum is a vital center for the consideration of all things New York.

The arrival of the present director, Susan Henshaw Jones, in 2003 initiated a fundamental transformation at the Museum, grounded in a recast mission—the investigation of the diversity, opportunity, and perpetual transformation that defines New York—and the strategic commitment, pragmatic plan, and successful funding to expand and thoroughly upgrade the physical plant while bringing revitalized institutional programs (exhibitions, education, collections stewardship, and information access) solidly into the 21st century. As a result, visitorship has more than doubled in the last decade, reaching a high of nearly 250,000 people.

In addition, the Museum has vastly expanded its online audience through the debut of digital projects that have advanced key organizational objectives: increasing public access to collections and illuminating the history and life of New York City. Since 2008, the Museum has successfully raised over \$2.5 million in public and private funds to digitize its rich collections, creating surrogate images that expand research access and prolong the useful life of these materials (see page 21 for a list of digitization and collections planning grants). Since the launch of the [Collections Portal](#) in 2010, over 135,000 fully cataloged objects with high-resolution images have been made available via the internet. In spring 2013, the Museum also launched a “[Catablog](#),” a website created with blogging software that provides short descriptions of discrete collections via blog posts in order to increase access to archival collections still awaiting digitization. When appropriate, these posts link to the collection’s full finding aid, and as collections are digitized and become available on the Portal, the Catablog posts send researchers directly to the images of the objects within the collection described.

Project Background

Within broader institutional efforts to increase public access to the City Museum’s collections, the Ephemera Collections fit two strategic goals expressed in an institutional plan to provide long-term care and access: prioritizing *on-mission* objects according to their condition, risk, and importance for re-housing; and digitizing collections, prioritizing the most *heavily used and requested* collections. The Ephemera Collections represent a rich body of primary source material for scholarly research and public programming, and has the potential to benefit the American history field in general by bringing unique examples of material culture into the public arena for discovery, study, loan, and reproduction. Therefore, enhancing intellectual and physical control over these objects is a priority for the Museum.

As noted previously, only 3,700 objects in the Ephemera Collections have basic placeholder catalog records, and 1,850 have no record at all—a limitation which hinders access for both internal and external research. At this time, accessing ephemera objects usually involves the painstaking and time-consuming task of physically searching through numerous boxes of material. Research inquiries are often very specific in nature, and the Museum may only hold one or two objects relevant to a particular query. As a result, objects that would be appropriate for public research queries or the Museum’s programs are often overlooked; in turn, external researchers are referred to other repositories, increasing their workload; and for internal programming, the Museum borrows a similar object from another institution, incurring unnecessary expenses in loan fees, labor, and transportation.

In 2010, in recognition of the growing importance of the Ephemera Collections for both internal and external research and study, the Museum hired Lindsay Turley as Manuscripts and Reference Archivist (Project Director for the proposed project). She stewards the Ephemera Collections as well as related collections of manuscripts and maps, assessing materials, identifying processing priorities, cataloging objects, and providing researchers with access to the collection. Ms. Turley also supports current grant-funded projects, including the previously referenced NEH-funded work on the Davies Collection, which includes conservation of approximately 65 maps and digitization of approximately 400 maps.



*Press badge, 2004
Republican National
Convention.*

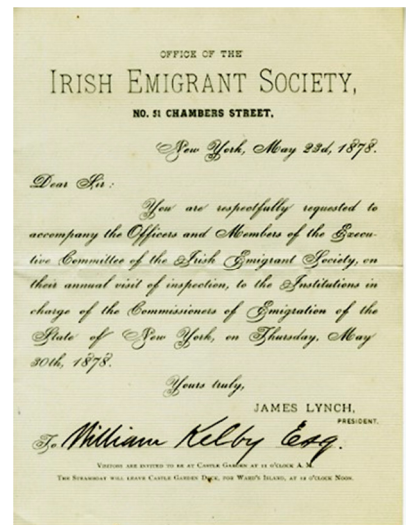
The City Museum has already made significant progress toward improving access to the Ephemera Collections, but much work remains to be done. The diverse and specific nature of ephemera objects requires object-level cataloging in order to facilitate full access to these materials. Researchers accessing ephemera are often seeking details such as the venue or date of the event, the engraver of the invitation, the host or attendee at a particular event, or the subject of a presentation. Object-level cataloging provides the most comprehensive and efficient means of accessing this collection when focusing on particular research topics. Once the ephemera are fully cataloged and digitized, both internal and external researchers will be able to conduct their research quickly and efficiently from any geographic location with an Internet connection.

Re-housing the ephemera objects goes hand in hand with digitizing and cataloging them. In order for the Museum to provide long-term access to these objects both for research and programming, the collection must be re-housed in its entirety. While these materials are currently stored in a climate-controlled curatorial center, the individual objects are not stored according to modern archival principles and require re-housing to avoid further damage and ensure their long-term survival. Re-housing the objects as they are cataloged and digitized will further preserve them.

Scope of the Project

The intended goal of the proposed two-year project is to provide improved access and increased longevity to the Museum's Ephemera Collections. Ms. Turley has surveyed the 45 discrete subject-based collections, obtaining an estimate of approximately 7,200 objects eligible for digitization, cataloging, rehousing, or a combination of all three tasks. The specific goals of the project are to:

- Review 6,500 objects, identifying any exact duplicates, redundancies, objects not of museum quality, and those unrelated to New York City so that they are not digitized. This will decrease the total number of objects digitized by approximately 15%, to around 5,600 objects.
- Create complete catalog records for approximately 5,935 objects.
- Refine incomplete catalog records for approximately 665 objects.
- Capture high-resolution images of approximately 3,675 objects without existing photography (many of the objects are two-sided or multi-page, resulting in approximately 8,500 new image files).
- Upload approximately 12,000 images (including the 3,500 already captured, but for which no cataloging exists) for a corresponding approximately 5,600 catalog records to the Museum's Collections Portal.
- Re-house approximately 5,700 objects.
- Conduct condition assessments, with an eye toward object stabilization measures to be funded through future grant opportunities.
- Process all individual thematic ephemera collections to create a structured arrangement and archival finding aids, and share the aids via the Museum's Catalog.



Invitation from the Irish Emigrant Society for its "annual visit of inspection" to New York City immigration facilities, 1878.

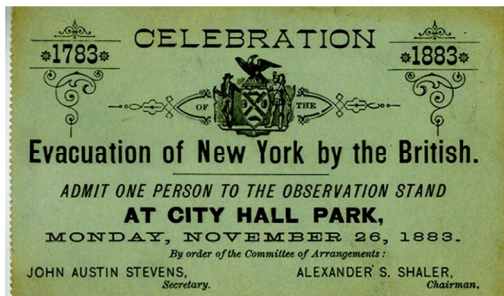
Some portions of the relevant collections have already received partial treatment, accounting for the disparity in object counts across project activity types; work already accomplished includes the cataloging of 665 menus and other materials relating to public dinners; the rehousing of 1,500 trade cards; and the digital capture of

1,350 objects related to advertising, 150 pieces of ephemera related to culture and entertainment, and 225 speakeasy cards and bootleggers' price lists. The project's anticipated goals also reflect that approximately 15% of ephemeral materials will not be digitized because the objects are duplicates or redundancies, are not of museum quality, or are unrelated to New York City.

METHODOLOGY AND STANDARDS

Present Physical Condition, Housing, Re-housing, and Storage

The majority of the objects considered for inclusion in the proposed project are in good or fair condition. More pressing than any one individual object's current condition is the manner in which the Ephemera Collections as a whole are housed. All materials are stored in the Museum's on-site curatorial center, which was completed in 2008 and is equipped with high-density shelving and zoned climate-control for different media types. However, within this improved environment, the objects are not housed according to archival principles, and require re-housing to ensure their long-term survival.



Ticket to the 1883 Celebration of the Evacuation of New York by the British.

Ephemera are stored on shelves in horizontal boxes rather than vertical ones, and while the objects are enclosed in archival sleeves, the weight of the paper is not substantial enough to provide the same level of support as archival folders. Because the boxes are oriented horizontally, each object must be removed from the box to access to the one below it, rather than allowing a researcher to look through the information on the tabs of the folders in a vertically oriented box and only remove the actual object related to the research inquiry.

Objects are stored within boxes with other objects of varying sizes and weights, causing damage to those items both above and below. Additionally, some materials have been folded to fit into available boxes and need to be re-housed in appropriately sized boxes or oversize drawers. Staff members re-house objects in Ephemera Collections as they are accessed for research inquiries, and a total of 1,500 trade cards have been re-housed in full, but in order to decrease needless handling of materials and prolong their useful life for research and exhibition, it is vital to re-house the entire collection as part of a full-scale cataloging endeavor.

The Manuscripts and Ephemera Archivist will process the ephemera materials as a group and execute an arrangement plan upon the 45 discrete subject-based collections, so that similar collections are incorporated into larger hierarchies of related material. As the project includes only artificial collections (those assembled by staff over the years and arranged according to subject), the work plan will not conflict with archival principles require respect for the provenance and original order of a collection.

Existing State of Intellectual Control

Reliable metadata records are essential to facilitate access to the Ephemera Collections. Past record-keeping practices have caused ongoing legacy issues with physical and intellectual control of these materials, but the Museum is addressing this problem aggressively, prioritizing the role of documentation and cataloging standards in order to provide improved stewardship.

Currently the Ephemera Collections must be accessed by consulting multiple tools, the first of which is ARGUS, the Museum's collections management system. Aside from approximately 665 objects related to special event dinners and approximately 700 buttons and badges, only 350 ephemera objects have comprehensive catalog records in ARGUS as a result of research and exhibition access. Approximately 1,850 objects from the Ephemera Collections have no catalog record at all, and the remaining approximately 3,700

objects are represented by basic placeholder catalog records. These records were generated by a machine-read import of the Museum's accession cards in 2009 (funded in part by the IMLS). However, the resulting data was not always parsed to the appropriate fields, and the records are rife with optical character reference errors. The records that do exist lack standardization, as well as essential information such as location and condition reports. Thus, while searching ARGUS may give users an idea of whether an object related to a search query exists, it does not provide any specific details about the object's information—including where to find it. Additionally, as the skeleton records lack significant details as to the content of the objects, relevant objects are often overlooked when conducting general searches.

The other existing tool for access is the Manuscripts and Ephemera box list, which includes over 300 boxes of manuscripts, ephemera, and documents arranged alphabetically by subject. Users must physically pull boxes to search for each object. Many of the subjects overlap, and it is often difficult to determine, for example, if an invitation to a particular public event might be found in "Balls," "Entertainments," or "Social Events." The process of locating a single object may take several hours.



Flier for The Road to Freedom costume ball, 1925.

Intellectual Control Following Completion of Project

At the end of the proposed project, an additional 6,500 ephemera objects will have full catalog records in ARGUS. Following digitization, the image and descriptive metadata for 5,600 objects will be uploaded to the Collections Portal for public access; the remaining 900 records (those for duplicative, redundant, or questionable objects) will exist in ARGUS for internal use only. The Project Director will also execute an arrangement and processing plan on the Ephemera Collections, integrating similar collections into larger hierarchical collections, and will create corresponding archival finding aids and post them on the Museum's Catalog to enhance research access both online and on-site.

Cataloging Methodology

The Museum's local cataloging manual is based on *Cataloging Cultural Objects: A Guide to Describing Cultural Works and Their Images* (American Library Association Editions, 2006) and utilizes a local lexicon developed using the Getty Art and Architecture Thesaurus and Library of Congress Subject and Name Authority Terms. Every object cataloged under the auspices of the grant will have the following minimum information in the ARGUS catalog record:

- Administrative Metadata: unique object identifier (accession number), department, collection, gift number, and credit line.
- Descriptive Metadata: title, description (brief), object type, subject(s), creator (when applicable), and object date.
- Physical Metadata: dimensions, condition, and location.

The public record that accompanies the digital image of the object available via the Collections Portal will mirror the internal record in the collections management system, without including the administrative metadata (except for the unique object identifier), condition, or location.

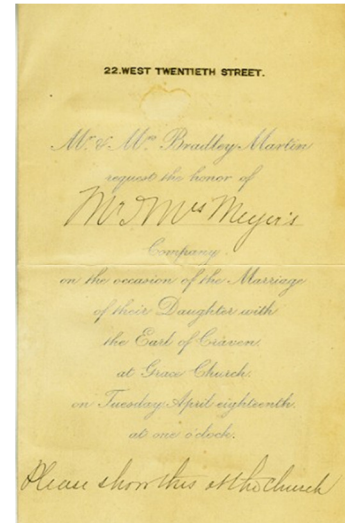
The Museum will look into programs such as the Getty's *Cultural Objects Name Authority* to share its records with the public via national federated catalogs. Additionally, collections staff are in the process of exploring

other management systems to replace the version of ARGUS currently in use, and will be considering these systems' ability to allow for data harvesting and Open Archives Initiative (OAI) functionality, to increase public accessibility to collections. In anticipation of the time when our data will be harvestable, the Museum is ensuring that data is properly structured by adhering to the *Cataloging Cultural Objects* metadata standard, which is a recognized by the American Library Association and maps to several other metadata standards.

Digitization

Approximately 3,675 objects will be digitized under this project, the vast majority of which are within the public domain. Because many of the objects are two-sided or multi-paged, an initial assessment of the collections indicates that the project will result in the capture of approximately 8,500 new individual digital images, and the ability to upload the 3,500 already captured, but for which no cataloging yet exists. The Museum's Collections Portal has recently added new functionality to support the display of multi-page objects, making this the ideal time to begin large-scale digitization of ephemera objects. Unless digitizing all pages of an object will be harmful to the binding of the object, all pages of the ephemera objects will be captured and made available to the public as part of this project.

Digital capture will be performed in the Museum's on-site digital lab, which was completed in 2011. The lab's technical specifications conform to the Federal Agencies Digitization Guidelines Initiatives' standards in image capture and are consistent with standards used at the Library of Congress and National Archives and Records Administration (see Appendix E for a full description of lab equipment and set-up). The Museum has been capturing high-quality image content since summer 2008, and the entire digitization team is experienced in this process. (Prior to the completion of the purpose-built lab, work was conducted within a temporary space on-site, under consultation with two vendors recognized as leaders within the field.)



Invitation to the marriage of Miss Cornelia Bradley-Martin to the Earl of Craven, 1893.

SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES AND DIGITAL CONTENT

The proposed project will address the Ephemera Collection's cataloging and photography needs to facilitate public access, and will extend the useful life of these materials by rehousing them per archival specifications. The outcomes of this project will be sustained in future by recently established Museum policies that require all newly accessioned objects to be cataloged, photographed, and reboxed as they are accessioned. To support these policies, the Museum has increased its collections staff significantly over the past three years, and increased funds in the collections care budget so that the staff has the resources to acquire proper archival housing for day-to-day maintenance of the collection (though the Museum still must seek funding for large-scale re-housing projects like this one).

Technical support for ARGUS, the collections database, and the digital lab is provided by a two-person IT department. The Collections Portal is supported by Orange Logic, a digital asset management firm whose clients include the International Museum of Photography/George Eastman House in the U.S., and the Réunion des Musées Nationaux in France. The Museum stores all original digital captures on 88 terabytes of on-site server space, and 90 terabytes of off-site backup storage protected by a redundant power infrastructure and security measures. (Refer to Appendix F for a full description of our digital preservation policy). The Museum "owns" its ARGUS data in the internal collections management system locally, and by contract it also owns the data served by Orange Logic via the Collections Portal. Both are proprietary databases: ARGUS runs on locally-installed Sybase (Windows), while Orange Logic's Web-based platform for data entry and for public searching is Cortex 4, which runs in a Microsoft SQL server environment. Orange Logic production

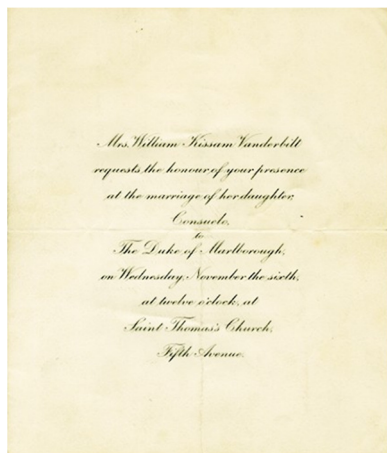
servers will host web derivatives for all digital assets. Orange Logic also operates hot sites for failover and business continuity purposes.

The Collections Portal is the tool by which the Museum facilitates online public access to its holdings. Its sustainability is a key institutional priority. Since its launch in 2010, the Portal has already experienced two major “renovations,” adding increased search functionality, such as date and the ability to exclude certain search terms, and filtering options, allowing users to refine initial search results by photographer and object type, batch cataloging modifications, the aforementioned functionality to support multi-page objects, and a front end redesign to allow Museum staff to better contextualize collections. At that point, it also became accessible on smart devices such as the iPad. As the Museum continues to add different types of objects and collections to the portal, we will work with Orange Logic to ensure that the user interface meets the needs of the public.

DISSEMINATION

By facilitating internal research access, the proposed project to catalog and digitize the Ephemera Collections will help the Museum to disseminate this rich resource to nearly 250,000 on-site visitors each year through its own exhibitions, publications, and educational programs. Upon adding complete catalog records and digital images for approximately 5,600 ephemera objects to the online Collections Portal, the Museum will also disseminate the project results to more than 400,000 virtual visitors each year.

The Museum will further disseminate the results of the project through targeted outreach to a professional audience. Announcements about the improved accessibility of collections will be sent to national and local archives and history listservs such as the American Historical Association, American Association for State and Local History, the Ephemera Society of America, and the Organization of American Historians. The Museum will also submit articles to the publications of archival professional organizations such as the Society of American Archivists, Mid-Atlantic Regional Archivists Conference, New York State Archives Conference, and the Archivists Roundtable of Metropolitan New York, describing the staff workflow, decision-making protocol, and any challenges experienced in implementing the project. We will reach out to the Archivists’ Roundtable of Metropolitan New York to co-host a program showcasing the project.

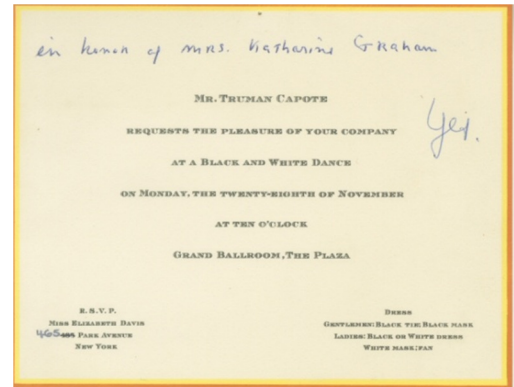


Invitation to the wedding of Consuelo Vanderbilt to the Duke of Marlborough, 1895.

When the materials cataloged under the proposed project are accessible online, the Museum will create a marketing strategy for both the research and lay communities. In addition to professional outreach, we will conduct outreach via social networking channels, including Facebook (19,000 fans) and Twitter (16,000 followers). The Museum will highlight objects from the Ephemera Collection, encouraging Museum members and friends to visit the Collections Portal regularly to learn more.

As a result of the increase in public awareness of the Museum’s collections generated by the 2010 launch of the Portal, in 2011, the Museum launched a blog (mcnyblog.org), which features highlights from the collection, as well as a behind-the-scenes look at efforts to increase access to our holdings. The blog will be another forum for disseminating the results of the Ephemera Collections project. Two of the Museum’s blog posts were picked up by the Travel Channel’s “Mysteries at the Museum” program, leading to the production of two episodes. One of these posts, [Showman or Scientist](#), featured an admission card from the Ephemera Collections.

The Collections Portal provides access to high-resolution images in digital format. These images are available for licensing and for professional reproduction; low-resolution images can be downloaded directly from the Portal and are intended as reference images only. The images are accessed for a wide range of creative, research, and educational purposes. The Museum also has an agreement with ArtStor that expands audiences with about 60,000 digitized photography holdings. An aggregator such as ArtStor reaches many more potential users who may not visit the Museum's website.



Invitation to Truman Capote's Black and White Ball, 1966.

WORK PLAN

If awarded funding by the NEH in May 2014, Ms. Turley, the Manuscripts and Reference Archivist (hereafter referred to as the Project Director) will immediately begin the search to hire a part-time Archival Technician and graduate student interns. The Ephemera Collections project will be her primary focus for two years. The project timeline (detailed further in Appendix D) is based upon the digitization team's current rate of cataloging and photographing similar objects.

- May-July 2014:
 - Project Director begins search, hiring, and training of Archival Technician and student interns.
 - Project Director refines new structured arrangement for the 45 thematic collections and identifies the order in which collections will receive treatment.
 - Basic re-housing supplies are ordered.
- July - October 2014:
 - Archival Technician and student interns hired. Project Director trains staff on the specifics of the collections management system, conducting condition assessments and general object handling, and applying the local Museum cataloging manual and lexicon.
 - 40% of objects have been processed, assessed, and prepared for digitization and/or cataloging, and rehousing (excluding oversize and three-dimensional objects).
- November 2014 – February 2015:
 - 85% of objects have been processed, assessed, and prepared for digitization and/or cataloging.
 - 45% of objects have been digitized.
- March – June 2015:
 - All objects have been processed, assessed, and prepared for digitization and/or cataloging, and rehousing (excluding oversize and three-dimensional objects).
 - 75% of oversize and three-dimensional objects have been rehousing.
 - All objects have been digitized.
 - 25% of objects have been catalogued.
 - 5% of objects are integrated into new archival structure; finding aids are created/ updated.
- July - October 2015:
 - 85% of all objects have been catalogued.
 - All oversize and three-dimensional objects have been rehousing.
 - 75% of objects are integrated into new archival structure; finding aids are created/ updated.
- November 2015 – February 2016:
 - All objects have been catalogued and are reviewed for quality assurance.
 - All objects have been integrated into new archival structure.
 - Project Director finalizes all finding aids, and posts them to the Catalog.

- Collection images and all associated metadata are uploaded to the Collections Portal.
- March – April 2016
 - Project dissemination takes place with outreach to scholarly and lay communities.

STAFF

Current Museum Staff (*Resumes for Museum staff are included as Appendix G.*)

- **Project Director: Lindsay Turley, Manuscripts and Reference Archivist**, will hire and train project employees, provide day-to-day staff oversight, and oversee work-flow progress on all aspects of the project. She will also vet all objects for copyright concerns prior to digitization, conduct preliminary processing and assign numbers to objects brought into the collection without a documented accession number, identify duplicates and redundancies, execute the hierarchical arrangement, write finding aids, and disseminate the results of the project. (50% of annual time in years 1 and 2)
- **Lacy Schutz, Director of Collections**, will provide support for any complicated issues that may arise in relationship to workflow or researching an object provenance, and manage coordination with Orange Logic, hosts of the Collections Portal, to plan image uploads. (10% of annual time in years 1 and 2)
- **Stephen Petrus, Andrew W. Mellon Post-Doctoral Curatorial Fellow**, will consult with the Project Director on potentially redundant or duplicative ephemera objects considered for exclusion from digitization. (10% of annual time in year 1 only)
- **Michael F. Dressler, Collections Manager**, will assist with physically accessing objects, placing supply orders, and designating permanent storage locations. (5% of annual time in years 1 and 2)
- **Anne DiFabio, Collections Technician**, will provide support with transporting and rehousing objects, and updating locations in the Collections Management System. (5% of annual time in years 1 and 2)
- **Ann Go, IT Manager for Collections**, will oversee collections database management, digital asset management, and disaster recovery, and serve as the gatekeeper to the newly-created collections digital assets, liaising with Orange Logic in coordination with the Director of Collections. (15% of annual time in years 1 and 2)
- **Mia Moffett, Senior Photographer**, will be responsible for digital capture of all objects shared via the online Collections Portal. (50% of annual time in year 1, 10% in year 2)
- **Lissa Rivera, Digital Imaging Specialist**, will provide assistance with photographing three-dimensional objects, and will quality-check images. (15% of annual time in year 1, 5% in year 2)
- **Lauren Robinson, Cataloging Coordinator**, will complete descriptive cataloging (such as creators and subjects), following the Museum's preferred thesauri, under the supervision of the Director of Collections. (10% of annual time in year 1, 50% in year 2)

Temporary Project Staff (*Full position descriptions are included as Appendix H.*)

- The **Archival Technician** will process objects for digitization and comprehensive cataloging by creating basic catalog records, conducting condition assessments, and identifying objects in need of conservation for future projects, and manage the re-housing process. This will be a part-time, 12-month position. (20 hours/week for approximately 38 weeks in year 1 and 12 weeks in year 2)
- The **Student Interns** (2) will assist with recording dimensions, locations, condition reports, and rehousing the objects that will be digitized and cataloged by the Cataloging Coordinator. Under the supervision of the Project Director, interns will also create complete catalog records with descriptive and physical metadata for objects excluded from the digitization process, which will not be accessible to the public, but only internally, to Museum staff. (750 intern hours annually in years 1 and 2)