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Looking through Stereotypes to see the Invisible

BY GLENN MASON

We drive by them, through them, and on them every day without even thinking about them. Here in the Pacific Northwest, place names such as Umatilla, Alsea, Amota Butte, Calapooya, Bly, Camas, Newaukum, Nehalem, Nisqually, Olele Point, Hoquiam, and Chehalis abound. In Portland we drive on streets named Tillamook, Multnomah, and Tualatin. We walk on Mohawk carpets. We drive Jeep Cherokees. We beef up Pontiac muscle cars. And we go camping in our Winnebago along the Umpqua River. For the most part, we take those place names and products for granted, not thinking much about their origins. Although we know they are there, they have become invisible to us, and that means that the people associated with those names have become invisible, too. Unless we make the effort, those names are just names. So it is with Indian imagery on ephemera.

From the first encounter of Europeans with the indigenous people of the Americas, images of the first peoples in books, artwork, promotional and advertising materials have shaped and reinforced our perceptions of American Indians, for better or worse. [NOTE: I use the terms American Indian and Indian throughout this essay out of respect for the elders of the Salish-speaking tribes of the Plateau with whom I worked for many years who preferred those terms over a number of others.] The first images included in book form were of an exotic nature: Indians clothed in skins and much adornment, surrounded by the strange species of animals, birds, and flora found in the Americas. [Figure 1] These images were the beginning of a history of ever-changing stereotypes of Indians based on the perceptions of the non-Indian observer. Positive images during the very early colonial period changed to images of savagery as the European settlers began to push the native tribes and bands from their long-established homelands. The strange and wondrous “exotic” became the tomahawk-wielding “savage,” ready to attack the helpless white woman clutching a baby to her breast. Images of “good” Indians often depicted those who helped the Europeans; negative images were associated with those who defied the Euro-American advancement.

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Figure 1. This “Indian Queen” image is a derivation of the Indian Princess theme. It portrays some of the earlier exotic flora of a “new” world and the Indian’s place within that environment. By the 1880s, however, the image could be used because Indians were no longer perceived as threats to Euro-American civilization and its westward movement. They were perceived to be part of a romanticized and mythical past – a vanishing race.

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Fellow ephemerists...

So, what exactly does The Ephemera Society of America *do*? What is its *purpose* in Life? What does it *offer* to its members? To its generous supporters, sponsors and advertisers?

As I sit down to reach out to the membership for the first time as your President, I find myself pondering these fundamental questions. Just as every member and every sponsor does each year at renewal time, I seek clarity on the essential nature of this, our 38-years-young 501(c)3, tax exempt, non-profit organization.

It is easier to say what we are not. The Ephemera Society is not a bricks-and-mortar institution with an archival collection and a permanent staff. We are not a political or lobbying organization. We are not a narrowly focused collector organization embracing but one subject, say postal history or airline collectibles or scrapbooking or manuscript diaries or posters or trade cards. Our mandate is far wider. We embrace those areas and dozens more.

To me, The Ephemera Society has become the primary American umbrella organization for those—individuals and institutions alike—who create collections, and for those who study collections in order to extract meaning, history and relevance to human culture. Collecting is a creative act, and extracting meaning from a collection an even more creative act. Board member Glenn Mason, in his article in this issue of the *Ephemera Journal*, elucidates an essential truth: once a collection reaches some critical mass it becomes a much richer source of meaning. The whole is indeed much more than the sum of its parts. If I were to collect one example of a company with an Indian name, it would be just another piece of paper amongst many. But if I were to collect 200-300 such examples, pervasive themes would begin to emerge, and the grouping would suggest numerous avenues of exploration.

For the past several years, the Society has benefited from an extraordinarily experienced and competent Board of Directors who—perhaps even more importantly—have been willing to put in long hours of work. This year's incoming class of new Board members adds strongly to our available expertise. One major recent Board accomplishment has been to clarify the goals, needs, and priorities of the Society; and then to set up a well thought-out committee structure to address them. Each committee is chaired by a Board member and populated by other Board members plus volunteers from the general membership (we seek and welcome more members to help out... please, just let us know of your interest).

As incoming President, I have a specific list of priorities I plan to address, beginning with a total revamp and update of our website. The present website does not work very well, as we have long known but been unable to afford to improve. Your Board is convinced that our online presence and content must be modernized and must become more prominent in the online world where so much of American culture takes place these days. We must add content and make our content easily accessible. Already, specific fundraising for that project has begun (feel free to out help by donating a directed gift!), and we are evaluating the portfolios of website developers.

In addition to major website improvement, our **To Do** list includes boosting corporate sponsorships and advertising; seeking foundation grant support for specific initiatives; increased collaboration with other collectibles organizations and shows nationally; involvement in regional shows and/or conferences in areas such as the Midwest, Southwest, Northwest and West; initiatives to encourage students to incorporate ephemera into their studies and projects; and—in addition to cash contributions —encouraging unrestricted donations in kind (ephemera, stocks, bonds, annuities, IRAs, antiques, vintage wines, etc.). A modest boost in charitable donations could put the Society on solid footing to increase membership benefits and to more effectively facilitate study, publication, and outreach.

Our upcoming 2019 annual conference, *Coming To America: The Immigrant Experience*, (March 14-17) promises to be exceptional. The topic was chosen for its timeliness and richness of ephemeral documentation. Don't miss it! The details are in your mailings, your monthly *eNews* and on the website. And the two day dealer fair will be a premier national show, as always.

Richard Sheaff, President

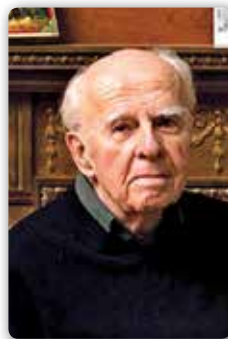
Remembering Two of Our World-Class Collectors

When **William H. Helfand** (1926-2018) was awarded the Maurice Rickards medal in 2006 he talked of his five decade collecting passion as also a way to relax during a stressful career: “Even though I retired from Merck as a senior vice president, I still always had a boss. But as a collector, I was the boss. I got to decide what I wanted to buy and what I wanted to do with them. I could come home and play with these things and be the decision maker. It was a very effective safety valve.” His decisions of what to do with his collections have benefited many institutions: the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the New York Academy of Medicine, the Library Company of Philadelphia, the Hay Whitney Medical Library at Yale, The David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscripts Library at Duke, The Huntington Library, The Darling Library at UCLA. His decision to broadly share his material through writing, exhibiting, loans, and donations came from a collecting philosophy: “It does no good if I keep my collections fixed away in boxes at home. It’s better if I write about my material or lend material to others and let them write about it. Collections allow us to learn something about the world. They are filled with historical evidence about what happened and how things work.” Perhaps Bill’s best-known exhibits with published catalogs were the 2002 “Quack, Quack, Quack: The Sellers of Nostrums in Prints, Posters, Ephemera and Books” at the Grolier Club, where he served as President from 2006 to 2010, and the 2011 “Health for Sale: Posters from the William H. Helfand Collection” at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

“A heck of a nice guy” was the phrase echoing in the ephemera world at the news of Bill’s death; as well as expressions of gratitude for his generosity — large gestures, such as endowments for research fellowships, and small, such as gifts of medically-related ephemera to add to another person’s collecting passion.

Ricky Jay (1946-2018) was the world’s greatest sleight-of-hand artist, a friend of David Mamet’s who acted in many of his movies, who also wrote and hosted many television specials of his own, and gave counsel to directors, curators, librarians and countless magicians. He was also a thorough Ephemera collector — collecting broadly as well as deeply, and then writing books about his revelations — the lives and careers of magicians (*Many Mysteries Unrevealed* 1990), or curious characters (*Learned Pigs & Fireproof Women* 1986; *Celebrations of Curious Characters* 2010). At last year’s Boston International Antiquarian Book Fair he was a featured speaker on “Magic, Cheaters & Remarkable Characters.” In 2016, the Ephemera Society organized a field trip to the Metropolitan Museum to see his exhibit “Wordplay” — a collection of the intricate drawings of Matthias Buchinger (1674-1740), the 29-inch tall performing prodigy. The book based on that exhibit garnered broad-based praise.

In 2005, an exhibit, “Extraordinary Exhibitions: broadsides from the Collection of Ricky Jay” was held at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco, and Ephemera Society member Marc Selvaggio organized a special event for Ricky’s collecting fans. The book out of that event: *Extraordinary Exhibitions: the wonderful remains of an enormous head, the whimsiphusicon & death to the savage unitarians*, was described by Ricky as an informal history of sensational, scientific, silly and startling attractions based on 17th, 18th and 19th broadsides, “with some observations on the convention of promoting such appearances, and digressions on the manner and method of printing, advertisements to do so, and with insight into the psychology employed to that end. All compiled in a monograph that is itself a shameless attempt to entertain and elucidate.” That last phrase could stand as Ricky’s legacy.



In this Issue...

This issue reflects both the mission and the demographics of our Society.

Impetus for the lead article came from a plan to mount an exhibit at a premier rare book fair—part of outreach to other collecting areas to introduce ephemera. Our past President **Bruce Shyer** is the collector, and **Glenn Mason** the author (also ephemera dealer and museum professional).

The Winter Carnival piece is based on a presentation at our 2018 conference and fair—the Society’s major event. **Maira Harris** is a good example of a collector dedicated to preserving, presenting, and writing about the ephemera of her own locale. She and her late husband supported historical societies in Minnesota’s Twin Cities, and created Pogo Press to publish ephemera-rich books of local interest.

Joel Goldstein represents our members who are artists attracted by ephemeral images and inspired to collect them. When his collection reached a critical mass, and his background research provided sufficient contextual framing, Joel self-published a monograph - which we introduce to our members.

Dale Sauter is one of our academic librarians interested in the nuts and bolts as well as the philosophical framing of ephemera in institutional collections. In our next issue he will address what to save—and how —of the ephemera of today.

—Diane DeBlois, editor



Figure 2. A common stock cut of an Indian looking down on the "progress" of western civilization creeping into his tribal lands. The image seems to symbolize the stoic, resigned feeling that the white invasion will continue, regardless of his opposition.

Throughout the history of the European settlement of North America, the imagery and perception of the American Indian has gone through many phases, some repeated decades apart as Western migration pushed toward the Pacific - part of the prevailing notion of Manifest Destiny. [Figure 2] Those various perceptions include: welcoming hosts, barbarians/savages, the noble savage, war-like,

bloodthirsty, stoic, healers, romantic, vanishing race, drunken Indian, renegade, childlike, uncivilized, dirty, lazy, pathetic, untrustworthy, and environmentalist. These, and other, generalized, unfair, misrepresented, and oversimplified characteristics shaped the stereotyping of American Indians.

There are many books and on-line articles available today, most written from an Indian perspective, that discuss the various types of

stereotyping and how words and images shape and perpetuate the public's perception of Indians [search the term "Native Indian stereotype"]. Just a few of the formats that non-Indians have introduced are: alphabet and other children's books (I is for Indian); dime novels; Hollywood Western movies; television portrayals; commercial packaging and



Figure 3. This booklet of apple recipes issued in 1917 by the Skookum Packers Association of Wenatchee, Washington indicated that their "Skookum" (a Chinook jargon word) and "Indian Head" apples had enjoyed world-wide distribution since 1910. Their "Skookum Injuns" coloring books featured the adventures of two Indian children, "Ki" and "Lo." Many children's books were, and, unfortunately, still are, erroneous in their visual and written descriptions of real Indian life and often used hurtful words, like Injuns.



Figure 4. The depiction from Longfellow's Hiawatha in the oval inset of this Arbuckle Coffee trade card for Minnesota is representative of the popular theme of the "romantic" Indian.



Figure 5. Railroads and other transportation companies, along with local Chambers of Commerce and entrepreneurs like Fred Harvey, used the romanticized “past tense” of Indian cultures to attract tourists.

advertising; cigar store Indians; toys; playing “cowboys and Indians”; harmful words (savage, drunken Indian, Injun, squaw and buck) and expressions (ugh and how); team mascots; artwork, photography (Curtis’ “Vanishing American”) and literature (Longfellow’s “Hiawatha”). [Figures 3 & 4] In addition, the pan-Indian concept that all



Figure 6. The connection between the American Indian and growing corn as an ad for fertilizer is more obvious than many uses of the stereotypical and romantic image of a proud, noble, colorfully dressed Indian.

Indians are the same — sporting feather headdresses and living in tepees — ignores the fact that there are over 550 federally recognized Indian nations in the United States, consisting of many different tribes and bands, each with its own ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic differences. In addition to these, and many other examples, is the often-used past tense when referring to American Indians

(such as “how they lived” as opposed to “how they live”), which subtly suggests that Indians are no more; they are gone, hence, invisible. [Figure 5]

When it comes to printed ephemera, probably the most prolific use of Indian imagery was, and still is, associated with the selling of products. Advertising often included stereotypical images associated with widely held perceptions of a particular time period or connected with the product being advertised, such as the Indians’ association with tobacco. [Figure 6] Other Indian images appear to have no apparent connection to a product. [Figure 7] Some, perhaps, were used just for the sake of strong graphics. [Figure 8] Images of the Indian “Princess”; the stoic Indian; the spear thrusting warrior; the resigned or defeated Indian watching the advancement of the white man’s infiltration into once-tribal lands; the Indian healer or medicine man; the Noble Savage; or the quintessential generic Indian wearing a full-feathered headdress were, and still are, used to sell and promote everything from sports teams to food products.

In the 19th and early 20th century, one of the more common users of Indian images (and product names) was the patent medicine industry. With so many plants in America that were unknown to white settlers, whites began to learn about Indian herbal remedies. Over time, as Indians were pushed farther and farther from white settlements, there was a tendency, once they were removed and there was no more perceived danger from them, to romanticize or idealize them. Indian herbal remedies were appropriated by white “physicians” or “doctors” claiming to have intimate knowledge of Indian medicine. [Figure 9] In actuality, these

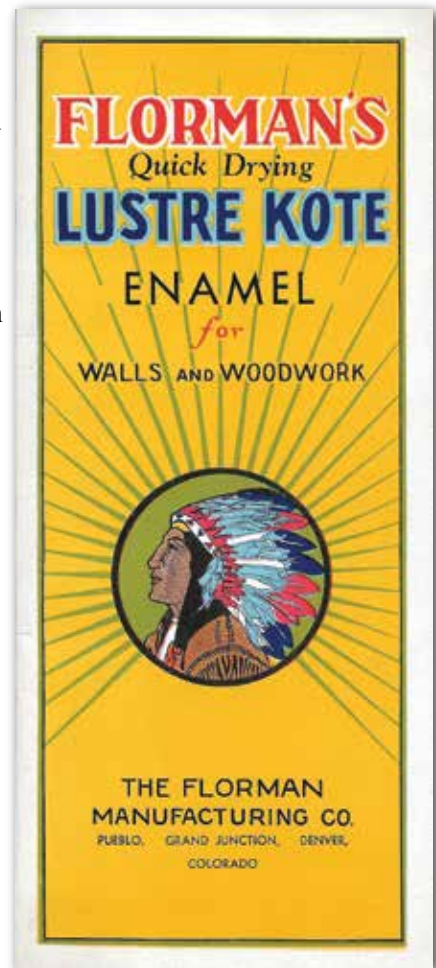


Figure 7. Sometimes Indian imagery is just used for design purposes. What does the stylized Indian have to do with up-to-date Lustre Kote enamels being promoted in 1941? Unless, perhaps, it is making a relationship to the colorful outfit of the pan-Indian as it relates to the paint samples included in the brochure.

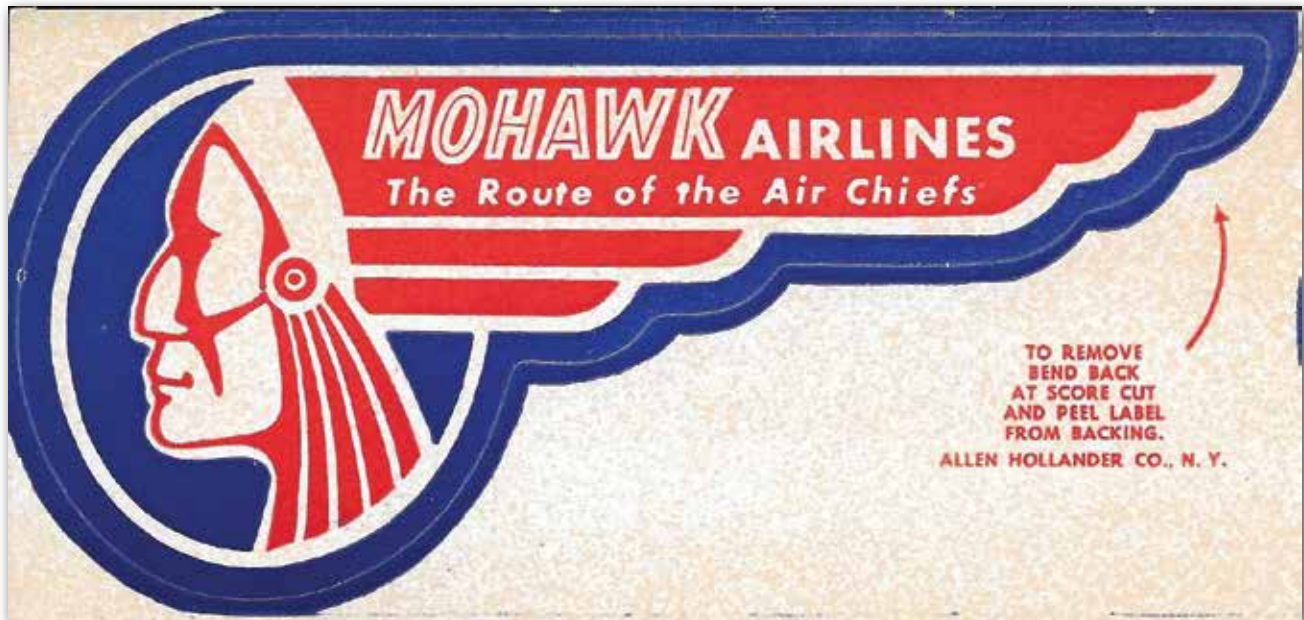


Figure 8. The streamlined Art Deco logo for the Mohawk Airlines, “The Route of the Air Chiefs,” is a great design, similar in design concept to that of the Pontiac hood ornament. The use of the phrase “Air Chiefs” implied to potential patrons that they were like Indian Chiefs, leaders above all others.

patent medicines were not Indian remedies, but Americanized imitations. Printed trade cards and illustrated labels for bottled patent medicines that featured Indian names and images were produced in great quantities. [Figure 10] Patent medicine products like *Kickapoo Indian Cough Cure*, *Oregon Indian Ague Cure*, *Dr. Morse’s Indian Root Pills*, and *Old Indian Liver & Kidney Tonic*, offered the promise of Indian healing powers. The colorful covers of the almanacs produced for *Dr. Morse’s Indian Root Pills* typically show an Indian warrior in a Plains-style feathered headdress on a white stallion, about to spear a vicious bear. [Figure 11] The threat of disease (the bear) will be vanquished by taking these *Indian Root Pills* (the warrior with the deadly spear). On the surface, this would seem to be a positive image., but it helps reinforce the myth that all Indians ride horses, wear feathered headdresses, and are fierce warriors.

In attempting to define why the “Indian concept” sells, Marchell J. Wesaw, in an article titled “Finders Keepers? Adulteration of Native American Cultures in the Name of Profit” (*Cultural Survival Quarterly* magazine, December 1994), suggests that the Euro-American society, by manipulating and exploiting the Indian stereotype, validated the appropriation of Native land and resources. If Indians were made out as demons, the Indian wars and efforts at exterminating them were that much more palatable. Today, by making Indians into spiritual leaders of a New Age, or into healers, and environmentalists, mainstream society is again engaging in stereotyping. These may seem to be positive, but they are stereotypes nonetheless, and just as harmful to an American Indian individual’s sense of identify, and self-worth.

In 2018, the National Museum of the American Indian opened an exhibition titled “Americans” that examines how images of native people have been fundamental to American culture, commerce and government [go to: <https://americanindian.si.edu/americans/>]. The exhibit displays a broad assortment of items associated with Indian images and names, ranging from a classic 1948 Indian

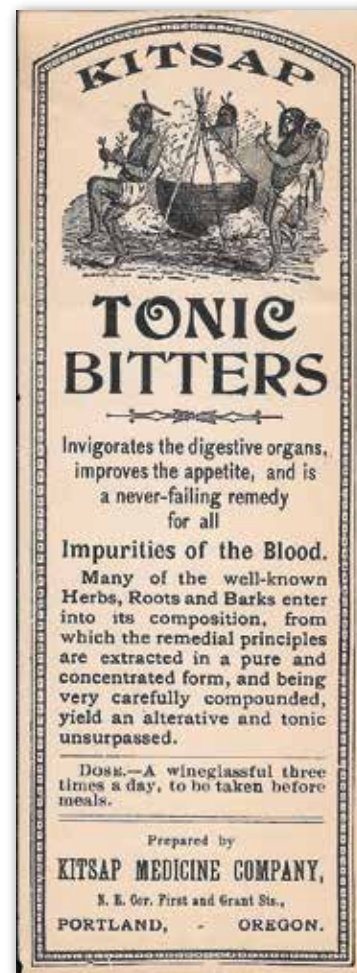


Figure 9. This label from the Kitsap Medicine Company of Portland, Oregon, uses a Washington tribal name and an image of Indians dancing around a boiling European caldron of the mixture of “herbs, roots and barks” that made up their Tonic Bitters.



Figure 10. Since most of the mineral springs and hot water spas developed in the 19th and early 20th century were originally used by tribes and bands in close proximity to their location, it might seem appropriate that the Cal-a-poo-ya Smiling Water tonic from Calapooya Springs near Cottage Grove, Oregon should carry a derivation of the local tribal name. However, the artist who drew the graphics pictured an Indian of the past as he or she imagined, not dressed as an indigenous Kalapooian.

Chief motorcycle, sports team logos, and fruit box and vegetable can labels to toys, books, and movie posters. In the central gallery of the museum alone, there are over 350 representations of American Indians in popular culture. Publicity for the exhibit acknowledges that much of American Indian imagery was patronizing and based on fantasy. Some of it was a projection of American ideals, based on perceived affinities between what Americans wanted to be, and what native cultures once were. [Figure 12] One of the inherent values in seeing so many items connected to a single theme at one time, is the potentially jarring effect it can have on the viewer. Seeing isolated pieces of ephemera or three-dimensional objects that incorporate Indian imagery may not engender the same visceral response as seeing a multitude of similar items. Seeing this quantity of material in one place can make one stop and think, "Whoa... what is this all about?" The viewer can begin to understand that his impression and knowledge of American Indians may have subconsciously been shaped by the proliferation of product advertising depicting Indians as unreal or fantasy figures. This bombardment of false imagery in our history may have helped make the real American Indian "invisible." [Figure 13]

Each of us, based on personal experience, has our own prejudices, impressions, and cultural filters when looking at stereotypes. We may come to different conclusions as to why. It takes effort to think through such things. Understanding what was going on in America during the period a particular Indian image was used and applying it to the why, can be hard work. And

often, even after studying the context, there is no clear answer. Take for example, Sitting Bull. In 1876, the media portrayed him as the lead villain in the Battle of the Little Big Horn where Custer and his troops were defeated. But, only nine years later he was a popular personality with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. For the four months of 1885 that he traveled with Buffalo Bill, Sitting Bull was revered by the public as the "great warrior." From villain to icon? Soon after Little Big Horn, many of the resisting tribes were subdued, forced into treaties and relocated to

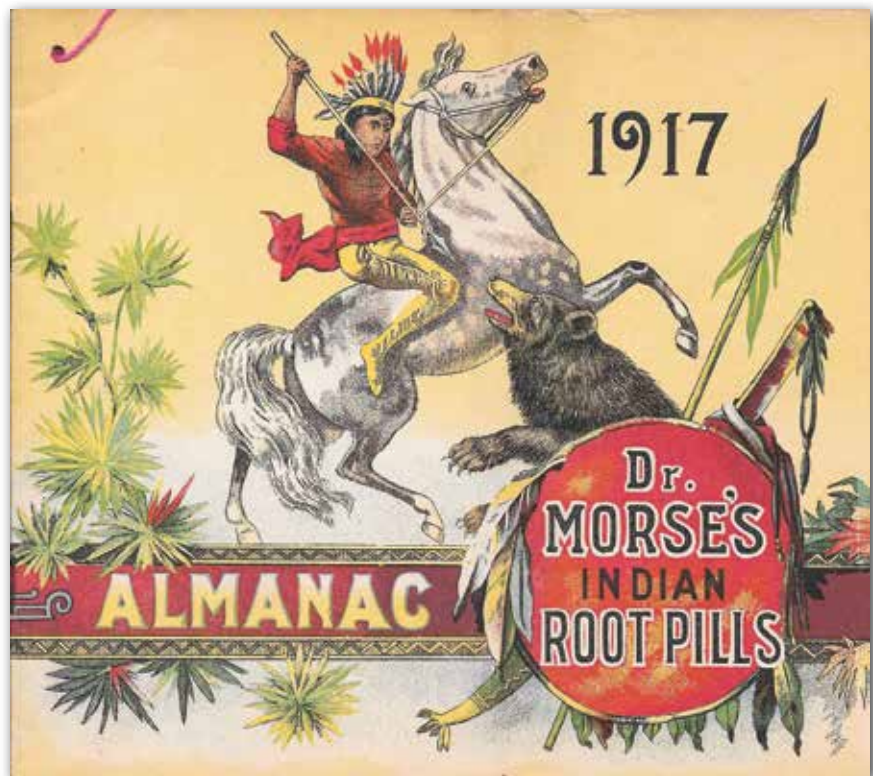


Figure 11. Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills for years used the image of an Indian warrior spearing a bear to symbolize the remedy power of the "Indian" medicine (symbolized by the warrior) over illness (the attacking bear).

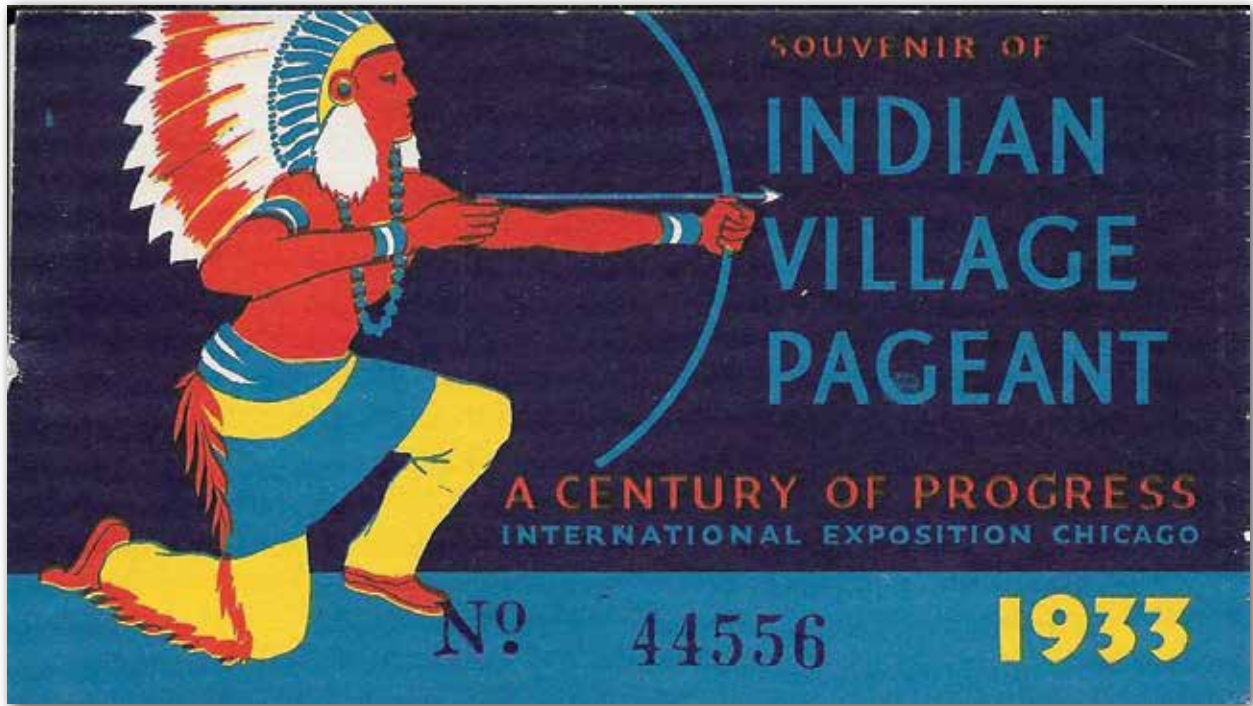


Figure 12. Is the image's message on this ticket to the Indian Village Pageant in Chicago's 1933 Century of Progress exposition hinting that the Indian, dressed in his headdress and fringed buckskins and posed with his bow and arrow, is a thing of the past and is now relegated to a side show of how the vanquished "used to live"?

reservations. For all practical purposes, the Indians were no longer perceived as a threat (Geronimo and his band of Apaches notwithstanding). It was now safe to recognize Sitting Bull as a warrior leader who symbolized the proud and noble Indian, in submission to the white man. His face (both real and stylized) began to appear on tobacco insert cards, cigar labels, and other product promotions. [Figure 14] He became one of the heroes of the "real" West – the Wild West of the past. As such, he, unfortunately and we have to assume unwittingly, became part of the fantasy west that was portrayed in the Wild West Show, pulp fiction, and Hollywood movies – the generic Indian in headdress attacking the cavalry or white settlers, and inevitably defeated and put in his "rightful" place, the reservation.

The Ephemera Society of America's booth at the 58th California International Antiquarian Book Fair, Oakland, California, February 8-10, 2019, will feature portions of Bruce Shyer's extensive collection of Native American image-related ephemera and three-dimensional pieces. In furthering the ESA's mission of using ephemera as educational aids to the understanding of American culture, the intent of Shyer's exhibit is to provide context to the appropriation of Native imagery throughout the last two centuries. Bruce Shyer is the out-going president of the ESA Board and is deeply committed to the educational component of the Society's mission.



Figure 13. What were the prompters for the imagined "Indian" outfit proudly worn by this young boy in the 1920s?

The curators of the NMAI exhibit say they don't want to erase Native American imagery from American culture, but they do want people to understand how it got there and why. This is where those of us in the Ephemera Society of America may be of help.

As collectors and preservers of ephemera with American Indian (or any potentially sensitive) imagery, we have a responsibility to understand the sources and reasons for that imagery and to pass on that knowledge. The ephemera we collect often includes racist, inaccurate, and harmful depictions. The Ephemera Society of America is sensitive to the concerns of objectifying races, and ethnicities, and the educational component of the ESA's mission is, without a doubt, the future of the organization. It is incumbent on us all to look beyond each individual piece and ask "why" and "how." If we collect such material, is it not our obligation to educate viewers about the danger of perpetuating stereotypes, and to call out and help in preventing new ones? [Figure 15] Not to do so with Indian imagery perpetuates the myth of the Indian: frozen in time, living in the past, being invisible. That is not the legacy any of us would choose. As members of the Ephemera Society of America, we must make our best efforts to put such imagery in its proper context.

For Further Reading

Berkhofer, Robert. *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (NY: Knopf, 1978).

Ganteaume, Cecile R. *Officially Indian: Symbols that Define the United States* (Washington, DC: National Museum of the American Indian, 2017).

Green, Rayna. "American Indian Stereotypes" from *Smithsonian 1979 Folklife Festival*.



Figure 14. Only six years after the Battle of the Little Big Horn, Sitting Bull went from a foe of the settlers to being featured on an 1882 N2 Allen & Ginter "American Indian Chiefs" tobacco card [left]. By 1910, American Caramel Company's E49 "Wild West Carnival" candy premium card implied that all threat of Indians was removed and that they were being relegated to carnival personalities as people of the past, stuck in the 19th century's imaginary "wild west" period. [Bigelow Collection]

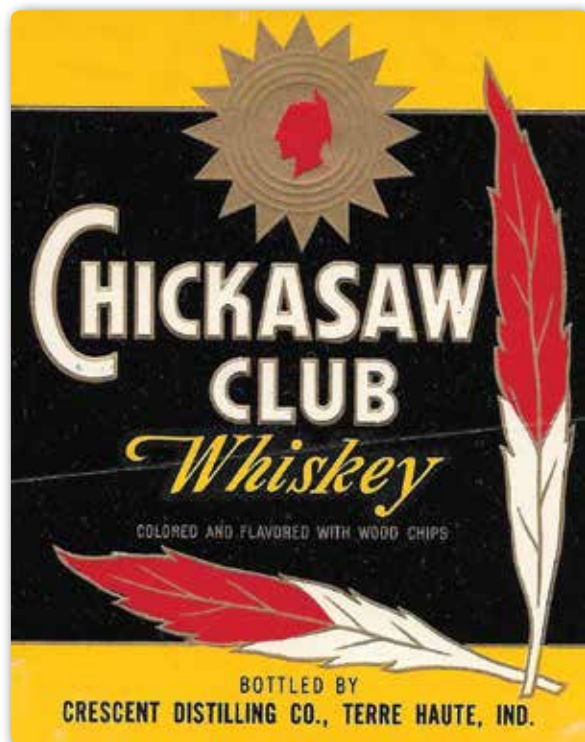


Figure 15. Although probably not the intention of the Crescent Distilling Company when branding their Chickasaw Club Whiskey, the name and graphics might reinforce the negative stereotype of the "drunken Indian."

Hirschfelder, Arlene, and Paulette F. Molin. "Stereotyping Native Americans," an article on-line from the Ferris State University's Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia.

Milesuah, Devon A. *American Indians: Stereotypes & Realities* (Clarity Press, 2009).

Odell, John. *Indian Bottles and Brands* (Bend, OR: Maverick Publications, 1977).

Pewewardy, Cornel. "Fluff and Feathers: Treatment of American Indians in the Literature and the Classroom" (*Equity & Excellence in Education*, April 1998).

Wesaw, Marchell J. "Finders Keepers? Adulteration of Native American Cultures in the Name of Profit" (*Cultural Survival Quarterly Magazine*, December 1994).

Glenn Mason is a retired museum / historical society director who worked extensively with elders from the various Salish-speaking Plateau tribes and bands. He currently deals in vintage ephemera as a partner with his wife, Judith, in Cultural Images and serves on the board of the Ephemera Society of America.



Pageants, Palaces, and Parades: St. Paul's Winter Festival

BY MOIRA F. HARRIS

The oldest winter festival in the United States, and certainly the one with the most unusual provenance, is St. Paul's Winter Carnival. It all began in 1885 when a group of St. Paul businessmen read a story in the New York press. While the exact newspaper account has never been verified, the gist was that St. Paul, at the time a young but steadily growing city, was cold, *very* cold in winter, and no place that a tourist would want to visit. Since tourists and emigrants were exactly what St. Paul was hoping to attract, such a negative blast had to be answered.

Montreal had already held several successful winter festivals. However, in 1886, their event was cancelled due to a smallpox epidemic. Montreal architect Alexander Hutchison had already completed drawings for an ice palace and he was willing to share his plans with St. Paul (Figure 1). His brother, J. H. Hutchison, became St. Paul's supervising contractor. So, following a meeting of interested St. Paulites in November 1885, the city agreed to hold their first-ever winter festival in January and February of the following year.

For a full carnival schedule, much was required: an ice palace, a storyline or "founding myth", at least one parade with marchers in matching outfits, as well as horse-drawn floats, rinks, slides, and numerous sports for visitors to watch and perhaps in which to participate (Figures 2 and 3). According to the storyline, St. Paul's carnival began with the arrival of the Ice King whose abode would be the



Figure 1. Advertising trade card showing the Ice Palace of 1886 designed by Alexander Hutchison of Montreal.



Figure 2. Elbridge Ayer Burbank, "Skating on the Mississippi River," from the Winter Carnival edition of Northwest Illustrated Magazine (January 1887). Skaters are wearing the blanket wool clothing of the newly formed Winter Carnival clubs.

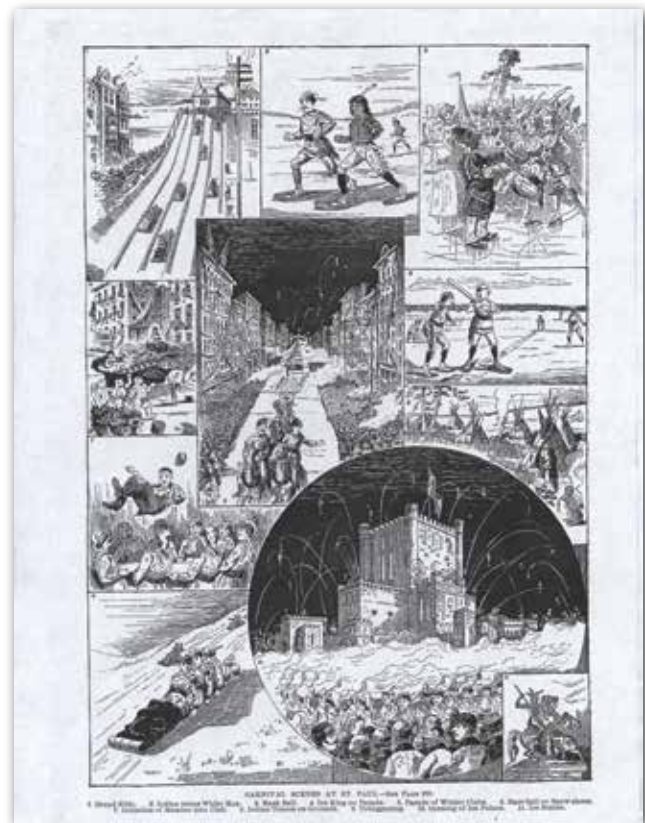


Figure 3. Wood engraving of Winter Carnival scenes and activities appearing in Harper's Young People, Vol. VII (1887), 269.

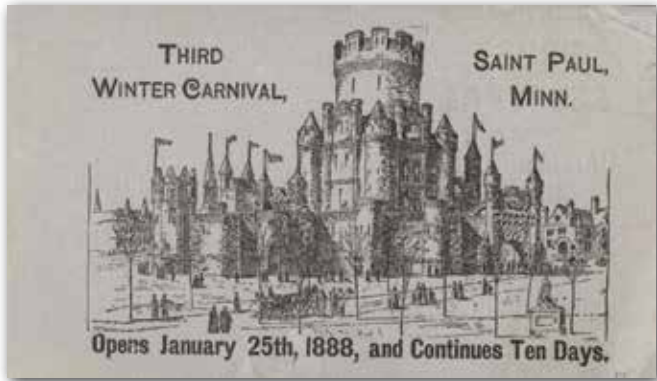


Figure 4. Woodcut illustration of the Ice Palace of 1888, designed by Charles Joy of St. Paul.

palace. After members of his “court” and the public enjoyed the wintry festivities, his rival, the King of Fire, with his army would storm and destroy the palace, heralding the end of winter and the coming of spring.¹

The location for the first festival was Central Park, near the spot where the third state capitol building would be erected two decades later. Around the palace would be ice sculptures (more were placed on downtown street corners), rinks for figure skating or curling, a Sioux Indian village (so visitors could appreciate how Minnesota’s earliest residents had coped with winter), and space for the various parades to begin and end. Slides were built for sleds and toboggans, but the major attraction was the enormous Ice Palace.

The Hutchison design called for a central tower, walls, arched entrances, and rooms in which to hold events including a wedding and concerts. This palace and the two structures built for the following festivals, all designed by St. Paul architect, Charles Joy, could have masqueraded as Romanesque Revival libraries or railroad stations in their shiny ice dress. The ice was harvested from many of Minnesota’s numerous lakes. These first three palaces, built for the



Figure 5. Photograph of the Ice Palace of 1888.

festivals of 1886, 1887, and 1888, were structures that could be entered (Figures 4 and 5). Palaces built of ice or snow block for succeeding festivals, could *not* offer that distinction because of increasing cost or, later, safety concerns.² So the later ice palaces were conceived as sculpture rather than architecture. Towers multiplied, sometimes with colorful roofs and sprawling walls. Some palaces rose from their bases into sharp, pointed spires. For visitors, these palaces built of glittering blocks of ice were magical, especially when colored lights played on their surfaces. This enhancement began as early as 1886, when electric lighting was still rare in the city (Figures 6 and 7).

Although the first committee expected to make the Winter Carnival an annual event, after a short gap the last nineteenth-century carnival was held in 1896, with no further extravaganzas until 1916 and 1917. The 1896 location was Rice Park, the city’s oldest and a downtown venue frequently used for carnival events.³ The home of King Borealis (the Ice King) was suggested by an ice



Figure 6. Curt Teich postcard showing the Ice Palace of 1937 at night, bathed in colored light. This palace, designed by Clarence Wigington who contributed others in the 1940s, stood across the street from the state capitol.

palisade. King Borealis was, in real life, a former justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court. His prime minister was a future governor, but his Aurora Queen of Snows was a unique choice. That year’s committee, perhaps seeking to satirize the era’s “New Woman”, chose a bar owner named Andrew Heckler as queen. Nicknamed “the Daisy Queen,” the Aurora of 1896 rode in the parade on a Percheron pony.

Louis Hill (1872-1948), who had succeeded his father James J. Hill as president of the Great Northern Railroad in 1907, created the next carnivals - the twentieth century editions. James was often referred to as the Empire Builder. Louis was both a successful railroad man and investor, but he was even more gifted as a promoter. Hill renamed the organization, the St. Paul Outdoor Sports Carnival Association, shortened the Ice King’s name to Boreas, and announced that the carnival would be a “hot one”.

Hill made an effort to include more businesses, large



Figure 7. LeRoy Neiman's serigraph of the ice palace at night appeared on the cover of a brochure issued for the Winter Carnival's centennial in 1986.

and small, as well as neighborhood groups in the parades. Participating businesses organized employees in uniformed marching units and could nominate an employee as a candidate for Queen of the Snows. Boreas was asked to select his queen, but decided that was too difficult, so all 108 candidates received the title. After decorated vehicles became stuck in the snow during the 1916 parade, Hill and his committee decided that the next year, everyone would walk.

The palaces built for the two Hill-directed carnivals were simpler, and were referred to as Fort Karnival, since they resembled western stockades. One was located in Rice Park and another near the third tee of the Town & Country Golf Club (Figure 8). Although Hill himself seemed to prefer the Swiss chalet architectural style (as suggested by his homes in North Oaks, Minnesota, and Pebble Beach, California, and the hotels he developed at Glacier Park), forts were his choice for Boreas.⁴

Each year Winter Carnival committees strive to find new events or competitions. One of Louis Hill's suggestions was to hold a dogsled race covering the 522 miles from Winnipeg to St. Paul, thus honoring the trip that had brought his late father from Canada to Minnesota (Figures 9 and 10). Entrants included Canadians, Metis (Canadians of part Indian descent), and two Americans, one named Fred Hartman. As Ring Lardner, then a columnist for the *Chicago Tribune*, wrote, Hartman finished the race in last place after one of his dogs died and another became ill. Only four huskies were left to pull the sled while Hartman was obliged to run ahead.⁵

In response to Louis Hill's call for other businesses to organize for Carnival participation, men from South St. Paul, home to the city's stockyards, created the Hook-'em-Cows (Figure 11). Members wore a maroon and white uniform with the Hook-'em-Cows badge on the jacket sleeve, hats with small bells and the slogan "Eat More Meat." They were led by the parade's only mounted drum major. Although smaller carnivals were held during the 1920s and the Great Depression, the citywide festival was not continued until it was revived in 1937. With the support of the city's major newspaper, the *Pioneer Press*, the Carnival story was re-written by Frank Madden, a journalist and that year's Boreas Rex. He enlarged the cast of participants, adding four Wind Princes and Princesses and the Royal Guard (once known as the Hussars) to the Ice King's court. The Fire King (now known as Vulcanus Rex) added members to his Krewe with whom he rode a 1932 fire engine built in Luverne, Minnesota. Later, courts of junior and senior royalty with variants of the Fire and Ice names were added. And, starting in 1971, organizers held a competition for a singer to perform as Klondike Kate. Many of the carnival alumni, like the Former Queens,



Figure 8. Photograph of an attack on the 1917 Ice Palace, located on the golf course of the Town & Country Club.



Figure 9. Poster for an exhibition dog sled race at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds, 1917.



Figure 10. Photo postcard of Bill Grayson, winner of the 1917 Winnipeg to St. Paul Dog Derby.

Figure 12. (below) Postcard showing the Theodore Hamm Brewing Company marchers pulling their queen candidate's sleigh in the Winter Carnival parade of 1917. Note the posters on the wall behind them showing the Carnival Girl logos of 1916 (skater on the right) and 1917 (skier on the left).



Figure 11. Photograph of John T. Flanagan, age 11, in Hook-'em-Cows uniform, 1917. Behind him is an early motor sled, an entry in that year's race for similar vehicles.



Figure 13. Costumes for the remaining Hilex gnomes, shown resting in front of a shop on West 7th Street in St. Paul, 2003. Author's photograph.



Figure 14. Postcard. Balloon races were part of many Winter Carnivals with the races often lifting off from White Bear Lake.

the Ice Kings, the Winds, or the Imperial Order of Fire and Brimstone for Vulcanus and his minions, later formed organizations. These groups rode in the parades, celebrated during Carnival week, and served on Carnival committees during the year.

Every Winter Carnival has held a daylight parade and a torchlight or nighttime parade, when the palace is attacked. Horse-drawn wagons of the 1880s were replaced in 1917

by marchers and by motorized floats when the Carnival was again revived twenty years later. Gordon Shumaker (1915-2000) built his first float for the Snyder Drug Store for the Winter Carnival parade of 1937. Later his company, by then named Famous Floats, built many of the floats for the Winter Carnival and the Minneapolis summer festival, the Aquatennial.⁶ (Figure 12) The full body costumes, resembling a drop of the company's bleach, were designed by its president. When new out-of-town owners decided to clean the Hilex warehouse and discard what were called "the gnomes," employees tried to save as many as they could. Thanks to this effort, a small group of Hilex gnomes still march in Carnival parades.⁷ (Figure 13)

Only the *Pioneer Press* and the bouncing team have participated in every carnival parade since the beginning. Inuit hunters, seeking a height advantage to spot their prey, invented the technique of bouncing a person on a tautly-held canvas. Members of the carnival bouncing team say that they have been "Throwing Up Since 1886."

The dogsled race has been supplanted by snowmobile or in hot air balloon races (Figure 14), marathons, curling bonspiels, speed skating races, and ice fishing competitions. Poster seals, printed in St. Paul (Figure 15), suggest some of the activities that Carnival planners have added to their events list. Visitors have been invited to snowshoe, ski jump, ski-jor, or attempt golf or baseball on ice. Figure skating shows began in 1917 with the German skater, Charlotte, who appeared locally in *Hip, Hip, Hooray!* accompanied by John Philip Sousa's band. In 1952 the *Pioneer Press* began its very popular Treasure Hunt. Competitors followed rhyming clues printed daily in the paper to find a medallion hidden in one of St. Paul's parks.

Begun over a century ago, the St. Paul Winter Carnival fulfilled its early goal of attracting visitors to the young city (Figure 16). Those visitors were welcomed by the people of St. Paul who had, perhaps to their own surprise, "discovered winter," as one writer put it. Warm weather has melted the ice palace before Vulcanus's Krewe could attack it, carnivals had to be cancelled during the two World Wars and the Great Depression, fundraising has become a challenge as fewer companies are locally owned, and planners have to decide annually which events will appeal to tourists and the local audience. Yet, in its third



Figure 15. Poster stamps featuring majorettes, sulky racing, and King Boreas with the key to the city (1941).

century, the St. Paul Winter Carnival can still proclaim that it is the Coolest Celebration in Town.⁸

Endnotes

1. Chosen for the role as Ice King (or Borealis) was Richard Johnson, a retired Civil War general. The “army” that destroyed his palace included a number of Civil War veterans. For discussion of many aspects of the Winter Carnival, see Moira F. Harris, *Fire & Ice. History of the St. Paul Winter Carnival* (St. Paul: Pogo Press, 2003).
2. Robert A. Olsen, “‘Another Siberia, Unfit for Human Habitation?’ St. Paul’s Super Ice Palaces, 1886, 1887, and 1888,” *Ramsey County History* 52:4 (Winter 2018), 3-12.
3. The 2018 ice palace, which planners hoped would attract Super Bowl-goers away from enticements in Minneapolis, was squeezed into Rice Park along with the ice sculpture competition and various booths.
4. Biloine W. Young with Eileen McCormack. *The Dutiful Son: Louis W. Hill. Life in the Shadow of the Empire Builder*, (St. Paul: Ramsey County Historical Society, 2010), 105, 111-117.



Figure 16. The concrete monument in Phalen Park commemorating those who volunteered to erect the centennial Ice Palace of 1886. Author’s photograph.



Figure 17. Both Boreas and Vulcanus thank those helpful to the Winter Carnival via certificates and ceremonies. Boreas Rex gave this certificate to the author’s husband in 2003.

5. *Fire & Ice*, 128. The Lardner column appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* on February 1, 1917. See Merrill E. Jarchow, “Hero: Frederick S. Hartman and the Winnipeg to St. Paul Dog Race,” *Minnesota History*, 42 (Winter 1971), 283-294.
6. *Fire & Ice*, 78-85; K. Marie O’Brien, “Fantasies on Parade,” *Hennepin History* 73:3 (Fall 2014), 19-27.
7. *Fire & Ice*, 90-92.
8. Large collections of Winter Carnival ephemera and memorabilia (like the numerous buttons available each year as gifts from Carnival royalty) are found in the collections of the Minnesota Historical Society, the St. Paul Central Library, and the Ramsey County Historical Society. Private collectors, like Marilyn DiMartino, have shown their collections in Landmark Center at Rice Park during Carnival days. Many people have photographed Carnival events and the Carnival organization itself has called on the talents of St. Paul-born artists like Charles Schulz (1922-2000) and LeRoy Neiman (1921-2012).

Moira F. Harris is a member of the Ephemera Society and has served on its board of directors. Ms Harris is an art historian (Ph. D, University of Minnesota), a member of the Ampersand Club, and the historical societies of Minnesota, Ramsey County and Hennepin County. Her book *Fire and Ice. The History of the St Paul Winter Carnival* was published in 2003 (see Figure 17). More recently she served as a consultant to a public television documentary on the Carnival in 2016.



Animal People

BY JOEL GOLDSTEIN

The depiction of hybrid animal-human forms, also known as “anthropomorphic,” “humanized,” or “dressed” animals, has a history as old as the visual arts.

After studying these images from different cultures and over a wide span of time, I am impressed that their creators, whether influenced by religion, myth, or fable, or “acting” purely by imagination, have crafted composite beings that are truly works of art, both haunting and strangely familiar.

Over several decades, I have put together a collection of examples, primarily from the nineteenth century, along with a library of books relating to the subject. My library includes the history of specific animals (both farm and zoo), folk and mythical narratives, and studies of caricature and satire. These are supplemented by books on printing and the graphic and fine arts.

The nineteenth was *the* century for hybrid human-animal imagery in Europe and the United States. But the roots of nineteenth-century fascination with the subject can be traced back to two Frenchmen, one of whom humanized animals in prose. The other compared human physique with animal imagery.

Jean de la Fontaine (1621–1695) was born in the Champagne region of France. For nearly twenty years, he held the office of inspector of forests and waterways, an occupation that put him in close proximity with France’s animal population. During these years, he also pursued a career as a poet, reading extensively the works of classical writers as well as French sixteenth- and seventeenth-century authors.

In 1688, he published the first of what would become twelve books containing over two hundred fables. Originally influenced by the fables of Aesop and



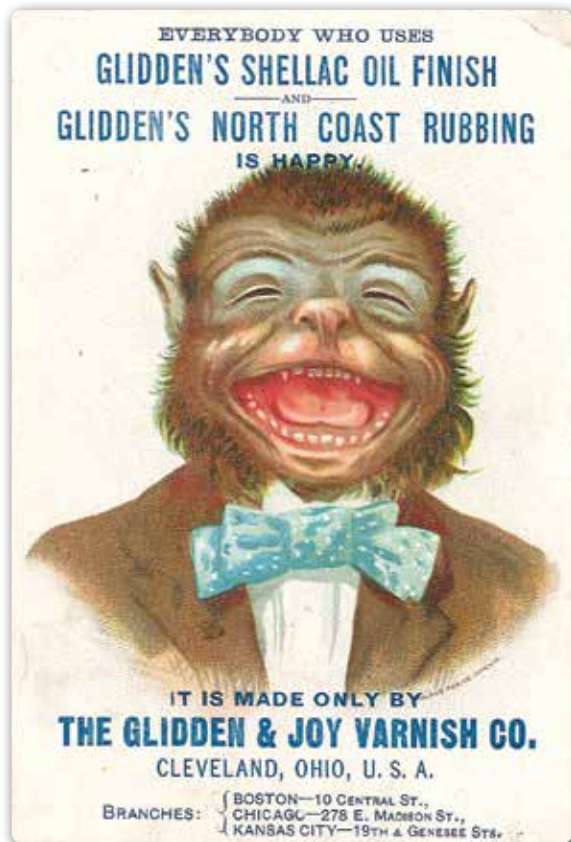


Figure 2. Chromolithographed generic trade card, Wilson Pub. Co. Chicago, overprinted for The Glidden & Joy Varnish Co., Cleveland, Ohio, 1890s.

Phaedrus, la Fontaine's modernized satires of human nature featured a cast of talking animals and combined a profound understanding of human foibles with a poetic lightness and humor. Originally intended for a learned audience, they became a popular success, remaining in print for over three hundred years following their first publication. Their longevity is a tribute to la Fontaine's ability to evoke an imaginary Edenic time when animals shared human concerns and could also speak.

La Fontaine was a protégé of Nicolas Fouquet, Louis XIV's minister of finance. Charles le Brun (1619–1690) had worked for Fouquet before being put in charge of the decoration of Versailles as Louis XIV's painter-in-chief. He was also director of the Gobelins factory that produced the furnishings and grand tapestries for the palace. Le Brun's important contributions to the history of humanized animal imagery were two groups of drawings.

The first group, presented at a meeting of the Academie de Peinture in 1678, was influenced by the sixteenth-century artist Giambattista della Porta's book *De Humana Physiognomia*. The forty-one animal and human comparisons that le Brun produced included a Zeus-like head juxtaposed with a similar-looking lion and five bird heads surrounding two bird-like men. The intent of these drawings was to show that similar

physiology reflected corresponding faculties and character in both man and animal.

In 1806, many of these drawings were reproduced to accompany the writings of John Caspar Lavatar. Lavatar, a Swiss pastor, was the popularizer of the pseudoscience of physiognomy, which stressed correspondences between physical appearance and moral character. His writings had a strong influence in France, England, and America, especially on the creative output of writers and artists.

The second group of drawings, produced in le Brun's capacity as founder, director, and principal theorist of the French Academy, was reproduced as engravings in book form in 1698 and titled *Conference sur l'Expression General et Particuliere*. The book, a manual for artists (and also used by actors and orators), was an attempt to codify, in words and pictures, the principal human passions and their manifestations in facial expressions. Proving highly popular, this book, like la Fontaine's fables, was still being studied in the first half of the nineteenth-century.

La Fontaine and le Brun, each in his own manner, had explored the animal-human hybrid, but it wouldn't be until 1829 and the publication of an album of seventy-three lithographs in Paris that such imagery would



Figure 3. Handmade ink and watercolor New Year's card, early 20th century.

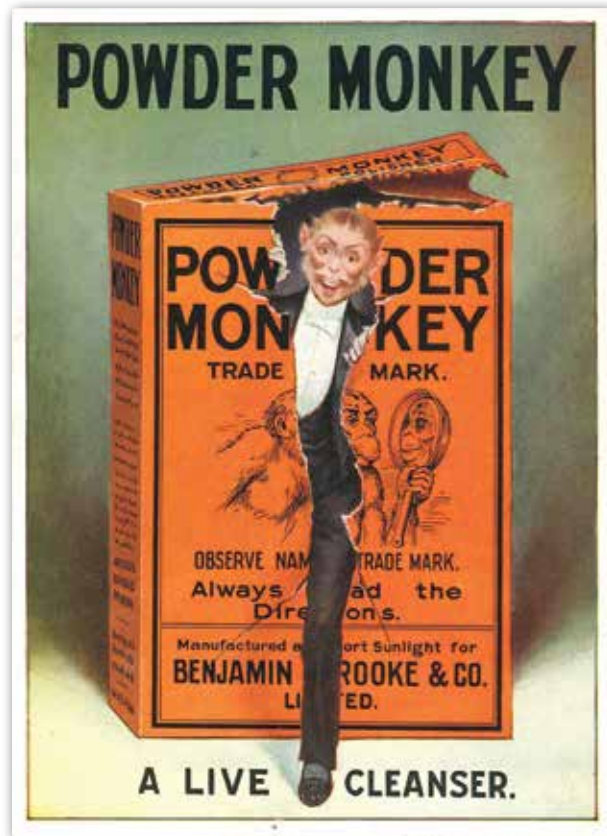


Figure 4. Chromolithographed trade card for Benjamin Brooke's soap, originally from Philadelphia, from 1899 produced at Port Sunlight near Liverpool, England.

become a part of European and American popular culture.

Titled *Les Metamorphoses du Jour*, it depicted a satirical world, masterfully combining animal and human characteristics. Anatomically correct animals with wonderfully expressive faces were fitted out with human lower bodies and clothed in the garb of tradesmen and the bourgeoisie of 1820s France. These animal-people discuss, work, and play out the roles of like-minded humans. But unlike illustrations of a similar satirical genre, which were often meant as a sharp, rapier thrust against a political opponent or pernicious law, these drawings create a complete fantasy world that puts in question a wide range of human customs and passions.

Les Metamorphoses du Jour bore the author name "I. Adolphe Grandville" on its title page, but by his next publication, titled *Galerie Mythologique*, Jean-Ignace-Isidore Gerard had adopted the nom de plume "J. J. Grandville."

Grandville, born in Nancy in 1803 into a family connected to the arts and theater, first became popular as an illustrator for the French satirical journals *La Silhouette* and *La Caricature*. Although he did produce humanized animal images for these publications, his illustrations, for his own books and the works of

others (including la Fontaine), were his most brilliant work. From 1829 until his death in 1847, Grandville created thousands of drawings, a large number of which contained his distinct animal-human hybrids (see Figure 1). Grandville would become the uncontested master of this type of imagery, the artist that others would strive to emulate. But few could equal his uncanny ability to meld human and animal seamlessly and ground them both in a real and surreal world. Works by Grandville were included in the first museum exhibition devoted to surrealism, *Fantastic Art Dada Surrealism*, held at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1936.

Several factors allowed these esoteric images to become popular in the nineteenth-century. Most important, the majority of people during this time lived in close proximity to a wide variety of domesticated animals, which they relied upon for transport, companionship, sport, and entertainment. Caring for sick animals and the slaughtering of animals for food, tasks later given over to specialists, had not yet been completely isolated from other household tasks. Simply put, nineteenth-century Europeans and Americans, whether living in the country or the city, saw, heard, and smelled a large variety of animals in the course of their daily lives.



Figure 5. Chromolithographed Easter postcard from Finland, early 20th century.



Figure 6. Chromolithographed moveable panel advertising booklet for the Evaristo Juncosa and Son chocolate company of Barcelona, Spain, late 19th century.

Charles Dickens, writing in the 1840s about a trip to America, describes a carriage ride down Manhattan's Broadway, where "two portly sows are trotting up behind the carriage and a select party of half a dozen gentleman hogs have just now turned the corner," while in Dickens's own London at about the same time, sheep, cattle, pigs, and calves traveled from the famous Smithfield Market through the city streets depositing approximately 40,000 tons of manure on their journey to the slaughterhouse.

Earlier eras had similar, if less hectic, relations to the animal world. But what made these images significantly more common were innovations in printing and publishing, especially the development of stone lithography by the German Aloys Senefelder in 1776. Lithography, which reached its peak during the nineteenth-century, was a cheaper and speedier way of reproducing illustrations than the labor-intensive wood engraving. This in turn led to rapid growth in both publishing and advertising as the century progressed.

Satirical journals and magazines became the most frequent publishers of humanized animal images. These journals were the province of a small group of readers at the century's beginning but became commonplace in many households by its close. Advertisers, always ready to adopt any eye-catching image, used these images in magazines, trade cards, and posters. While the hybrid animal images may seem surreal to our modern eyes, it's conceivable that to their original viewers they were both strange and familiar, even comforting in some way, as compared to the strikingly new images of the industrial revolution.



Figure 7. Chromolithographed April Fool's postcard, French ca 1900.



Figure 8. Book illustration by Charles H. Bennett, hand colored wood engraved by Joseph Swain, England 1857.

Many of the artists working for the satirical journals were influenced by illustrations in physiognomist Johan Caspar Lavatar's books. Though the illustrations in Lavatar's books were meant to stress "scientific" correspondences between physical appearance and moral character, in the hands of these gifted artists the illustrations served as a perfect springboard for biting satire, merging characteristics of human and animal to produce a very different vision.

These same satirical journals had a field day after the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* in 1859. For caricaturists and illustrators, the marriage of man and ape, gleaned from Darwin's theories, was heaven-sent, producing a steady stream of humorous drawings during the late 1860s and 1870s and spilling over into the generalized use of humanized animal images throughout the graphic arts (Figures 2 and 3).

But if these conjunctions weren't enough in highlighting animal and human relationships, the Western world's fascination with both the public zoo and the circus in the nineteenth-century went a long way to integrate exotic and rarely seen animals into the general psyche. Much of this interest in exotic animals grew out of the openings of municipal zoos. The primary zoologic garden, which no doubt fascinated both artists and the general public, was the menagerie at the Jardin des Plantes, founded in Paris in 1793. (Grandville illustrated "A Letter from the Giraffe of the Jardin des Plantes.") This botanical garden, which also housed a selection of mammals, became a template for zoologic gardens

worldwide, including the Gardens of the Zoological Society of London, founded in 1828. Many of the zoos, caricaturing Darwin's theories, held shows of clothed, trained monkeys, a practice still in existence at the Saint Louis Zoo's chimpanzee show as late as the 1950s.

The circus, an institution that blossomed in the nineteenth-century, was the other popularizer of exotic animals, acquainting much of the public with their first close viewing of animals previously seen only in books that were often filled with inaccuracies. An 1842 showbill for the American traveling circus of June, Titus, and Angevine headlined the group's show with the claim of "a beautiful Collection of Living Wild Animals comprising the stupendous Giraffe! the only one now living on the American Continent."

By the early twentieth-century, a close connection to animals, both real and imagined, had begun to wane. Most people, and especially city dwellers, rarely encountered a pig or a goat on their way to work. A letter written in 1909 by the children's book author Beatrix Potter presages the change in attitude toward clothed animals. Writing about a cat depicted in her book *Ginger and Pickles*, Potter mentions that the cat's unusual color is ill served by having to cover him up with coat and trousers. Ironically, less than ten years after Potter's letter was written, and hastened by the realities of the First World War, the dressed animal was



Figure 9. Chromolithographed trade card, France, late 19th century.

rarely depicted outside of children’s books or political cartoons and, eventually, a rarity even in those venues as the twentieth century progressed.

I’ve chosen images from the nineteenth-century and the beginning of the twentieth that depict not just clothed animals but those assuming human postures and facial expressions of humans. I’ve chosen to limit the use of political caricature, which made frequent use of human-animal hybrids, because many such images simply appended a human head to an animal body to make a less-than-subtle commentary on a particular politician without truly integrating the two components. I’ve also avoided most examples from children’s books with the exception of those that retain a realistic or even edgy quality.

This survey of work by artists covering nearly seventy-five years varies in scope, from the master of the genre, Grandville, to many unknown and forgotten artists employed by advertisers, publishers, and postcard manufacturers. Although some of their creations and their artistic styles vary widely, they all share a mixing of animal lore with human foible. The result is a purely invented being, reflecting the artists’



Figure 10. Photographic offset postcard by “Bert” copyright Larcher, with two actresses dressed as characters from Chantecler by the romantic French dramatist Edmond Rostand (Cyrano de Bergerac) ca1910.



Figure 11. Chromolithographed tobacco insert card (Series N81 Jokes) W. Duke, Sons & Co. 1890s.

ability to “humanize” his creation, imbuing it with emotions that he himself has felt.

Lionel Lambourne, in his book on Ernest Griset, a nineteenth-century artist who did both realistic and hybrid animal-human drawings, aptly sums up the Victorian preoccupation with the interrelationship of man and animal as “...part of the recurrent mystery of the anthropomorphic impulse, by which man, by his artistry, achieves the status of God, and remakes creation to his own image.”

Joel Goldstein

was asked in 1980 by Seven Heller, the *New York Times Book Review* art director, to work on a book about animals depicted as people throughout the history of visual arts. The idea failed to find a publisher, perhaps because of the magnitude of the subject; however, some of the research appeared in the form of an article in *Print* magazine, March–April 1981. Decades of collecting animal as people material followed and, in 2018, *Animal People: Images of Animals as People in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries* appeared - dedicated to “the booksellers, ephemera dealers, and flea market sellers who preserved and sold the images” that made the book possible (210 pages, available through on line book stores). Joel, an artist living in San Francisco, had his first One Man Show there in 1973, at the Upper Market Street Gallery. His graphic works have mostly been exhibited in California.



A Closer Look at Ephemera in Archival Collections

BY DALE SAUTER

Introduction

In the world of archives, collections that consist of only advertising materials, usually referred to as a subset group under the general definition type of ephemera, have been created purposely (or artificially), as a collecting scope by receiving items piecemeal or from the transfer of other repositories that decided to no longer have advertising as their collecting scope. There is also evidence that some advertising or “ephemera” collections have been assembled partially by removing advertising items from individual and unique manuscript and archival collections. The author feels a closer look at advertising materials is necessary before weeding them from collections. Past advertising reflects the society and culture during the time it was created, and can help provide better insight into the collection’s creator as well as to the cultural climate during the life of the creator.

Defining Advertising Materials and Their Importance

The official definition of ephemera by The Society of American Archivists is “Materials, usually printed documents, created for a specific, limited purpose, and generally designed to be discarded after use.” The following notes accompany the definition by SAA: “Examples of ephemera include advertisements, tickets, brochures, and receipts. A repository may collect ephemera as examples or specimens. Individuals often collect ephemera as mementos or souvenirs because of their association with some person, event, or subject; personal collections of ephemera are often kept in scrapbooks.”¹

Obviously, every collection and processing decision made will vary according to the individual situation, but the archival literature put forth by experts in the field can be beneficial to archivists in making these decisions.

T.R. Shellenberg, commonly known as “The Father of American Archival Appraisal,” states that “An archivist, continually and instinctively, must bring order and relation to unrelated things by sorting and categorizing—to the end of revealing the content and significance of the records with which he works. He must give meaning to them in order to make them known to others.”²

More specifically, since the 1970s many in the archives field have moved toward the notion of a more integrated attitude toward selection of materials when processing. In general, archivists moved away from strictly adhering to a repository’s guidelines or to simply guess what may be of use to researchers in the future. Instead, general recommendations moved toward the idea “to select a documentary heritage that adequately and accurately mirrors the society that created the record.”³ Given that advertising materials do indeed reflect society, it seems this supports a closer look at such materials when processing collections.

Looking further toward what records are important to select and keep, the following “qualities and characteristics of records with intrinsic value” are stated in Daniels and Walch’s *A Modern Archives Reader* as “Physical form that may be the subject for study if the records provide meaningful, documentation or significant examples of the form”; “Aesthetic or artistic quality”; “Unique or curious physical features”; “Age that provides a quality of uniqueness”; “Value for use in exhibits”; “General and substantial public interest because of direct association with famous or historically significant people, places, things, issues or events” and “Significance as documentation of the establishment or continuing legal basis of an agency or repository.”⁴ All of these qualities seem to be generally consistent with advertising materials in most cases, which strengthens the argument for a closer look at such materials when processing.

Duckett further tells us that, at the time of the creation of ephemera, the material is not considered possessing future value to researchers. However, over a period of time, the items become valuable because they were (by their nature) short-lived, resulting in archivists saving the material for future researchers.⁵

As another way to view the topic, O’ Barr tells us, is that “The social history preserved in advertisements is like an archaeological record. It is not a simple, faithful chronology of society but an assortment of bits and pieces on which the passage of social life is inscribed. By their very nature, advertisements are fleeting and ephemeral. Once they serve their intended purpose, they are typically discarded and quickly replaced. But some ads survive, preserved in old newspapers and magazine, on wire and tape recordings, and in kinescopes and videotapes. These preserved advertisements can be studied in the present for what they reveal about our collective past. From them, we learn not only about the techniques of past advertising but also about the society that produced them and the lives of the people who wrote, read and heard their messages.”⁶

Although much evidence exists on the value of advertising materials, as early as 1978, Pollay mentions the lack of use of such material for research by historians for varied reasons. He notes the perceived general bias, many times carrying over to historians as well, against business and its formative history. Furthermore, he explains that academics are rarely afforded inside access to advertising agencies and more “behind the scenes” activities. Pollay also argues that this lack of inside access is specifically a problem for business professors and liberal arts history professors. The final reason offered by Pollay is the fact that such materials are, in general, scattered among many collections in many locations, or in some cases, just plain non-existent.⁷

Looking at Pollay's observation made in 2013, we can, thankfully, see vast improvements regarding the previously mentioned lack of use of advertising materials. The first, particularly related to access and the problem of the "scattered" materials, is today's reality of digitization and the ability to provide access to these materials across the globe at the researcher's convenience.

Problems and Solutions to Access

Other recent occurrences have brought great improvements to the access problem. One of these is the recognition of the importance of, and the effort to save, advertising and other ephemeral materials by archivists and other professionals. William M. O' Barr, an anthropologist who has taught at Duke University for over thirty years, observes: "Let me add one thing about this, because I do have some experience with archival issues. I think the archival answer to this is that as long as it is being saved - because this stuff is so ephemeral - the focus has to be first on saving it. Anyone who is saving it is doing a good job, regardless of how they are saving it at the moment. That's the primary issue. My line on this is that it is always easier to study Byzantine art than it is to study 1950s advertising, because one was saved and one wasn't. So save it, and we'll worry later about the other issues. Too much just disappears."⁸

Faith Ruffin, an historian and curator at The Smithsonian Museum, explains that they hold one of the largest collections of ephemera in the country, and argues that advertising is indeed ephemera. The collection consists of literally millions of items dating back to the late 17th century. Interestingly, Ruffin also states that they are not collecting advertising that originates from email or the internet. She goes on to say that she works daily with a wide variety of researchers seeking to understand the past through advertising. Ruffin says advertising materials "provide a very interesting perspective with which to look at history and culture."⁹

Comments by other professors from their actual "in-class" experience offers the same endorsements for advertising materials as great research material. Arlene Davila teaches American Studies and Anthropology at New York State University. Of her experience, she says, "Advertising was integrated into our study of contemporary culture, consumption, the commodification of everyday life, private spaces, and ways of thinking. The course looked at advertising as one side of a wider process of the commodification of consumer culture that affects the way we think about our daily lives. That's my experience in teaching about advertising."¹⁰

Finally, one last quote from a university instructor reinforces the notion of the importance of advertising in understanding history and culture. Bob Goldman commented on teaching a course at Lewis and Clark College entitled "American Advertising and the Science of Signs." Goldman said, "I see the light bulbs go off when they [students] suddenly become aware of some process or relationship that we are talking about historically. They can begin to make a leap to the present when they suddenly see the relationship between advertising and ideology in the past. It allows them to begin to perceive their own historical

conditioning. Once this occurs, students are less inclined to take for granted their ways of seeing the world about them."¹¹

Besides the promotion of the importance of advertising materials, the existence of several important established advertising archives also helps with the ongoing problem of access. One example is The Advertising Council Archives at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, administered by their University Archives since 1986, that documents the story of public service advertising since the early days of World War II.¹²

Among the major advertising campaigns represented in the Ad Council Archives are The American Red Cross, saving bonds, forest fire prevention, the American economic system, traffic safety, aid to higher education, environmentalism, and the battles against drugs, drunk driving, and AIDS. The Archives contain campaign promotional materials and copies of thousands of ads in nearly all major advertising formats: magazines, newspapers, radio, television, billboards and posters. The archives also tell the story behind the ads. Among the 130 cubic feet are 27 record series of office files, board and committee minutes, publications, and campaign files that document the development of advertising campaigns and the decision-making process in the selection of campaigns and preparation of materials. The Ad Council Archives have been used by researchers studying wartime advertising, cultural history, and the development of advertising concerns.¹³

The David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Duke University received the J. Walter Thompson Company [JWT] Archives in 1987. Recognizing the opportunity to acquire related collections and promote their use, the library created the Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History in 1992 with funding from John W. Hartman and others. Through documentation and programming the Hartman Center strives to preserve and provide access to a variety of resources that reflect the rich history of sales, marketing and advertising and their impact on society.¹⁴

Another very important collection can be found at the Tamiment Library at New York University. Prior to 2009, the library's 650 linear foot "hidden collection" of printed ephemera was unprocessed and not adequately accessible to researchers. A grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities was awarded to the library in 2009 to allow processing of the collection. With this grant, staff was able to make the materials available via forty-four EAD finding aids. With these tools in place, the staff witnessed a large surge in use of the materials. The staff also commented that, "Tamiment validates the unique research value and historical importance of preserving material that was *made* to be ephemeral, literally disposable, in the first place. Printed ephemera opens a vast and inviting window on social customs, communications methods among unions, activists, and political parties, and, perhaps most invaluably, the materials provide insight into certain historical movements and causes that are not defunct or undocumented."¹⁵

One final testament to the importance — and increased access — of advertising materials can be found in Canada.

In 2012, Pirate Toronto, a business agency headed up by Terry O' Reilly, donated to McMaster University (Hamilton) a collection of archival materials numbering at least fifty thousand items. These items date back to 1981 and include such materials as casting session audio and videos, sheet music for jingles, and a variety of radio and television commercials. In addition, The Canadian Advertising Museum, an entity made up of a small number of advertising veterans who run a small website, are in the middle of constructing an internet-based Canadian advertising archive.¹⁶

Endnotes

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- ¹¹ "Roundtable on Teaching," 7.
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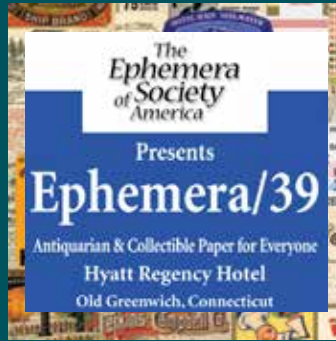
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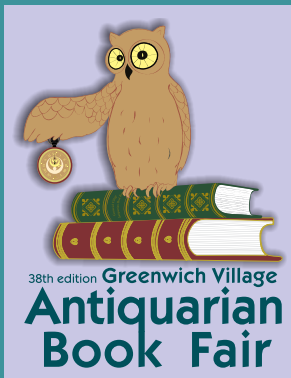


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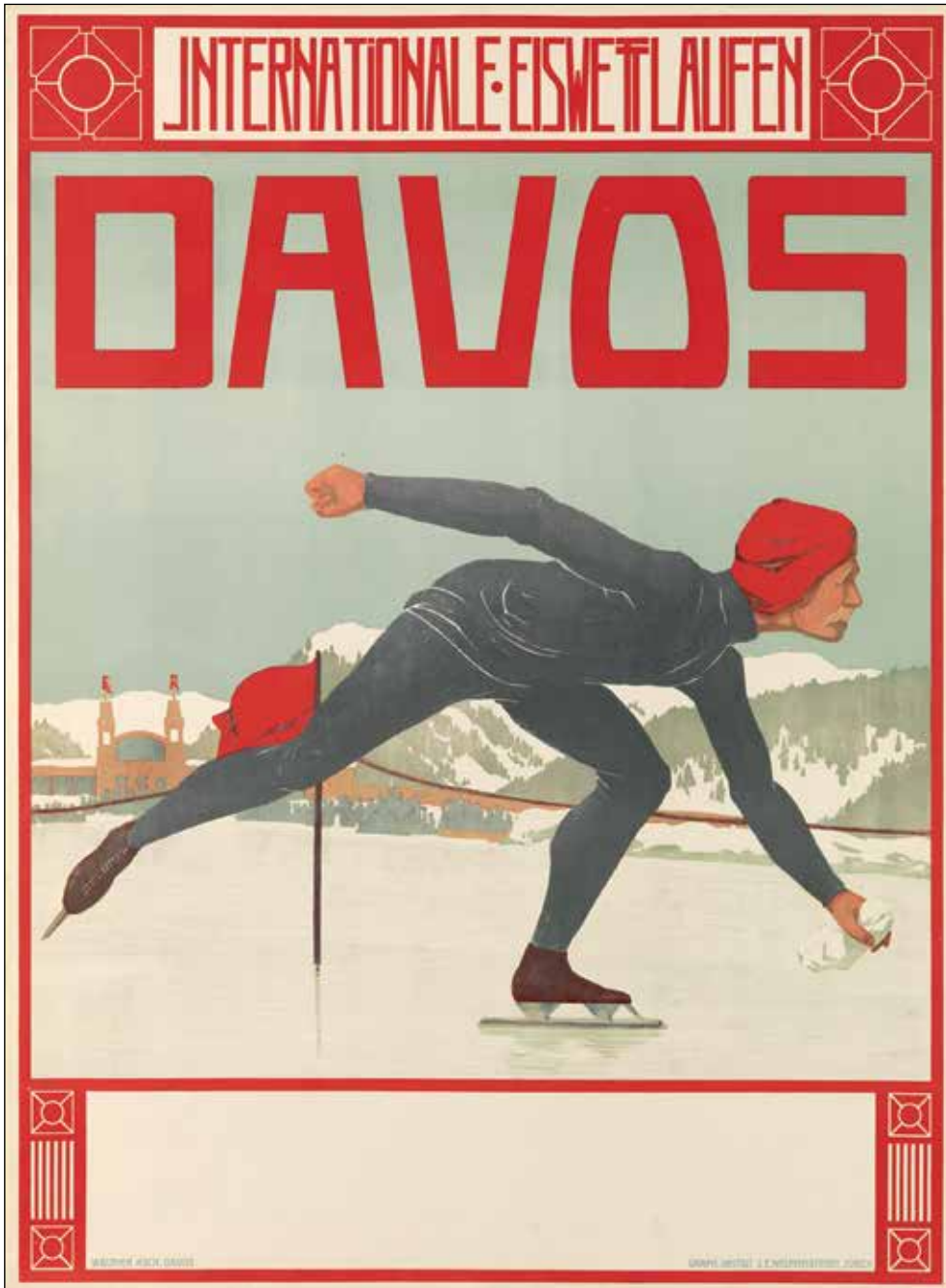
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