Exchange Cards

Advertising, Album Making, and the Commodification of Sentiment in the Gilded Age

Jennifer M. Black

This article examines the materiality of advertising trade cards used in the Gilded Age United States and resituates the medium within the post–Civil War culture of sentimental and personal exchange. Mobilizing evidence from over 3,000 cards and numerous scrapbooks, this article demonstrates that market culture commodified sentimental images and themes in chromolithographed cards, enabling consumers to appropriate them for sentimental expression in albums. The function and usage patterns of such cards as album keepsakes thus illustrates an underlying tension in the nineteenth-century ideals of separate spheres and sincere expression.

ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1877, nineteen-year-old Lizzie Cadmus received an album for a present. Over the next five years, Lizzie collected signatures, verses, and drawings in her book from friends and family members. The signatories included her cousin Emma L. Cadmus and her friend Winfield Margerum, who worked as a bookkeeper a few blocks away from her family's home in Philadelphia. Several friends, including Winfield, drew intricate designs around their names to further decorate the pages of Lizzie's book. But the page that stands out most is the one for Albert Whitman, who signed his name on Valentine's Day in 1880 (fig. 1). Around his name, he—or someone else—drew a beautiful pink blossom that outlined and framed his signature, mimicking the appearance of a decorated calling card (figs. 2 and 3). The soft, colored pencil drawing is not alone in the album, however: throughout Cadmus's book the names are decorated with pen and pencil drawings that mimic the design of personal calling cards and commercial trade cards (small printed advertisements). Thirteen years later, Elsie Sargeant Abbot visited the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. As she moved through the exposition's halls, Elsie collected advertising trade cards and other printed souvenirs of the displays (fig. 4). When she returned home to Germantown, PA, outside of Philadelphia, she pasted the materials in an album she received from a friend, Dorothy Welsh. Although Cadmus's album contained inscriptions and verses shared by friends, Abbot's album acts more like a visual diary, chronicling her passage between public and private life. Theater programs and photographs intermingle with pressed flowers and handwritten notes commenting on the experiences Abbot had as a young middle-class woman, traveling about the eastern seaboard and socializing with other young adults. What's interesting about both of these albums is that they crosscut categories in terms of their content, function, and use. Cadmus's album contained personal expressions

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Fig. 1. Page from Lizzie Cadmus album, 1877–82, showing Albert Whitman signature, February 14, 1880. Colored pencil and ink on paper; H. 5⅛″, W. 7⅞″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

yet was shared widely with her friends and family members—a semipublic record of her private relationships. Likewise, Abbot's album contained commercial prints and records of public entertainments yet appeared to be kept private. Finally, although they had different objectives in mind, both of these women appropriated handheld chromolithographs for personal expression and memory making in albums.

These two elements—chromolithography and personal expression (creative, communicative, and diaristic) through albums—came together in the 1870s as the nascent advertising industry struggled to appeal to an expanding class of consumers by experimenting with new strategies and slogans, new media and images. One tactic that created an almost overnight sensation was the adoption of chromolithographed trade cards for advertising. These handheld colorful objects functioned to communicate information about a product or service from the provider to the public and circulated like calling cards had in the antebellum years. They won the favor of middle-class consumers of all ages, sexes, and backgrounds, by appropriating the format, iconography, and usage patterns of other forms of exchange media that had circulated since the 1820s. By looking at the consumption of advertising trade cards in scrapbooks and albums, it becomes clear that scrapbookkeepers received these cards as objects divorced from their commercial origins and instead inherently connected to personal expression and gift giving. As objects that borrowed aspects of sentimental culture for commercial purposes, trade cards—and especially their consumption in albums—help to highlight the inherent tension within the nineteenth-century desire to separate public and private spheres, on the one hand, and within the ideal of sincere expression, a cult of manners and public display prescribed by the American middle classes as a way to distinguish themselves from working-class people, on the other hand. In borrowing images of children and flowers, framing their ads as gifts, and facilitating the consumption of trade cards in albums, printers and advertisers infused this commercial medium with the codes of personal expression. Moreover, Cadmus's and Abbot's albums demonstrate that individual consumers appropriated commercial objects for sentimental purposes in these years, precisely at the same time that market culture was appropriating sentimental images for commercial ends—in effect, commodifying sentiment by packaging it for consumption by the American middle class. Cadmus's and Abbot's albums, and many others like them, illustrate the fluidity, in the consumer's mind, of the boundaries between object and image, commercial and private. It was the materiality—the appearance, imagery, and usage patterns—of advertising

Fig. 2. Calling card for Ella Aldrow, ca. 1890. Chromolithograph on paper; H. 1½″, W. 3½″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

Fig. 3. Calling card for Mary A. Grant, ca. 1890. Chromolithograph on paper; H. 2″, W. 3″. (John and Carolyn Grossman Collection, Winterthur Library.)

trade cards that helped them fit within an existing culture of personal exchange.

Since the so-called cultural turn of the late twentieth century, trade cards have received much-needed attention from historians of advertising in the United States. However, many historians have traditionally de-emphasized the impact of trade cards on the rest of advertising history, relegating them to a premodern moment in advertising chronology because of their pre-1890 emergence. In such histories, these quaint and odd little pieces of ephemera appear primarily in the prologue to the main story: bursting into American popular culture at a moment that typically bears little relation to the so-called modern advertising of the 1920s, once advertising firms had professionalized and developed winning techniques.[1] Historians who have given trade cards serious attention see the images as reflections of the culture that made them: as expositions on the manufacturers' desires, aspirations, and understandings of their place in the world.[2] Likewise, these historians suggest that the designs on trade cards betrayed the Gilded Age's preoccupation with abundance and opulence and that the cards themselves typically served to socialize individuals—especially women and children—to the gendered, racial, and classed roles prescribed by American society and to the consumerist ethos that would prevail in the twentieth century.[3] While these investigations provoke important understandings of the place of visual culture, and especially advertising, in the history of the United States, their producer-focused arguments fail to consider the place of trade cards as material objects that people sought out, possessed, treasured, modified, displayed, and gifted to others. Furthermore, such investigations overlook the ways that trade cards' materiality facilitated their success with the public and fundamentally shifted the cards' meanings as advertisements.

Trade cards, and exchange cards more broadly, were ideal objects for album making. While they capitalized on the public fascination for colorful prints, they gained popularity because of a growing cultural impulse among middle-class Americans to col-

[1] Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 13–25; Susan Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1989); James D. Norris, *Advertising and the Transformation of American Society, 1865–1920* (New York: Greenwood, 1990), chap. 1. Recently, Stefan Schwarzkopf has argued that this teleological view of the history of advertising has limited historians' interpretations of the industry and thus presents a major problem for the future of the field. See "The Subsiding Sizzle of Advertising History: Methodological and Theoretical Challenges in the Post Advertising Age," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 3, no. 4 (2011): 528–48.

[2] See, e.g., Robert Jay, *The Trade Card in Nineteenth-Century America* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987), 1; Mona Domosh, *American Commodities in an Age of Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 56–57; Pamela Walker Laird, *Advertising Progress: American Business and the Rise of Consumer Marketing* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 6, 98. Kyla Wazana Tompkins offers an important detour from this literature in her examination of representations of African Americans on trade cards in the Gilded Age, arguing that the images provoked both desire and disgust and configured relationships between whites and blacks vis-à-vis consumption. See *Racial Indigestion: Eating Bodies in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 145–80.

[3] Laird suggests in *Advertising Progress*, 149, that trade cards symbolized opulence, while Ellen Gruber Garvey argues that they helped socialize children to the emerging consumer culture. See *The Adman in the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 17, 26. Other important perspectives are offered by Carl Robert Keyes, "Early American Advertising: Marketing and Consumer Culture in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia" (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2008); Maxine Friedman, "Home, Home, Sweet, Sweet Home: The Trade Cards of the New Home Sewing Machine Company (Mass.)" (master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1984).

Fig. 4. Pages from Elsie Sargeant Abbot scrapbook, 1893–99. Mixed media on paper; H. $9^{1}/_{16}''$, W. $11''$. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

lect and save chromos and other objects in personalized albums and scrapbooks. Scrapbookkeepers consumed chromolithographed trade cards by pasting them alongside other exchange cards in their albums and copying the designs of these colorful objects when composing sentimental remembrances to friends on the pages of autograph albums. Through the practice of scrapbooking, chromolithographed trade cards transcended their original commercial origins and became objects that friends and relatives used to communicate personal feelings, experiences, and ideas to others and to themselves. Mining the consumption of trade cards can provide an important mode of understanding the reception of these objects.[4]

Scholars have written about albums and scrapbooks since the early 1990s, when Patricia Buckler and C. Kay Leeper first suggested that they could be read as autobiographical records of an individual's lived experience.[5] Since then, historians, literary scholars, and others have offered hundreds (perhaps thousands) of pages digesting the treasures that might be found beneath the covers of the nineteenth-century album. Building on the notion that albums provide windows into the user's private soul, a host of scholars have argued that, like diaries, albums demonstrate the individual's aspirations, desires, and fantasies.[6] Yet albums were not

[4] Scholars working in the history of the book, and in particular readership, argued that album organization provides clues to understanding reception and individual response. See esp. Martha Langford, *Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife of Memory in Photographic Albums* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001); also Jennifer Wicke, *Advertising Fictions: Literature, Advertisement and Social Reading* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); Ellen Gruber Garvey, *Writing with Scissors: American Scrapbooks from the Civil War to the Harlem Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Jennifer Jolly, "History in the Making: A Columbian Exposition Scrapbook," in *The Scrapbook in American Life*, ed. Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott, and Patricia Buckler (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 79–96.

[5] Patricia P. Buckler and C. Kay Leeper, "An Antebellum Woman's Scrapbook as Autobiographical Composition," *Journal of American Culture* 14, no. 1 (1991): 1–8. See also Patricia P. Buckler, "A Silent Woman Speaks: The Poetry in a Woman's Scrapbook of the 1840s," *Prospects* 16 (1991): 149–69; Starr Ockenga, *On Women and Friendship* (New York: Stewart, Tabori, & Chang, 1993); L. Rebecca Johnson Melvin, *Self-Works: Diaries, Scrapbooks, and Other Autobiographical Efforts*, online exhibit (Newark, DE: Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, 2001), http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/exhibits/selfwork; Jessica Helfand, *Scrapbooks: An American History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Ronald J. Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray, "Is It a Diary, Commonplace Book, Scrapbook, or Whatchamacallit? Six Years of Exploration in New England's Manuscript Archives," *Libraries and the Cultural Record* 44, no. 1 (2008): 101–23; Molly McCarthy, *The Accidental Diarist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013). It is worth noting that while Buckler and Leeper might be credited with spearheading this literature in the 1990s, another key development came in 2006 with the publication of Buckler's edited collection (with Tucker and Ott), *Scrapbook*. Importantly, the editors' introduction to the volume provides key historical and contextual information to frame the use of scrapbooks in the nineteenth century, while the essays within offer a digest of several major areas of the field, including photograph albums, fan club albums, paper-doll "houses," and others. As Zboray and others note, many albums defy categorization even in these broad terms, and nearly all albums in this study contained some combination of drawings, inscriptions, pasted materials, found imagery, copied texts, and signatures. Throughout this article, I thus use the words album and scrapbook interchangeably.

[6] This is most notably shown in studies of a subset of collage albums known as paper-doll "houses." Beverly Gordon provides one of the most comprehensive views in *The Saturated World: Aesthetic Meaning, Intimate Objects, and Women's Lives, 1890–1940* (Chattanooga: University of Tennessee Press, 2006), 37–62. See also E. Richard McKinstry, "Papered Dream Houses Offer Clues to Imagined Lives," *Ephemera News* 22, no. 3 (2004): 1, 13–16; David Freund, "Personal Visual Albums," *Ephemera Journal* 14, no. 2 (Jan-

always private repositories of personal thoughts. Pushing back against the argument for private introspection in albums, some scholars have demonstrated the ways in which albums circulated in public (or semipublic) space and as such might be read as efforts to perform culturally defined class, gender, and racial identities.[7] Building on this strain of scholarship, several historians interrogate albums for what they can demonstrate about social networks and collaboration, using the objects as tools for understanding interpersonal communication and the maintenance of intimate and casual relationships.[8] A key figure in this field has been Ellen Gruber Garvey, who, following Deborah Smith, argued that scrapbooks (alongside trade cards) helped to socialize women and children to the emergent consumer regime in the 1890s.[9] Literary scholars find albums to be useful tools for understanding knowledge production in the past, turning to authors' scrapbooks to understand the writing process.[10] In a similar approach, historians look to amateurs' albums to understand how they processed important historical events or experiences and to club members' scrapbooks to understand how official histories and counternarratives were told.[11] A related field seeks to understand how albums assisted in memory recall and memory making.[12] Finally,

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uary 2012): 1, 4–10. Other studies pointing to scrapbooks as a record of aspirations and desires include Raechel Elisabeth Guest, "Victorian Scrapbooks and the American Middle Class" (master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1996); Jessica K. Dallow, "Treasures of the Mind: Individuality and Authenticity in Late Nineteenth-Century Scrapbooks" (master's thesis, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1995).

[7] On albums that circulated in public or semipublic space, see Susan Stabile, *Memory's Daughters: The Material Culture of Remembrance in Eighteenth-Century America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004); Sarah McNair Vosmeier, "Picturing Love and Friendship: Photograph Albums and Networks of Affection in the 1860s," in Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, *Scrapbook*, 207–19; Jolly, "History in the Making," 79–96; Erica Armstrong Dunbar, *A Fragile Freedom: African American Women and Emancipation in the Antebellum City* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 120–47; Elizabeth Siegel, *Galleries of Friendship and Fame: The History of Nineteenth-Century American Photograph Albums* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010); Emily Hamilton-Honey, "The Girls of 83 Round Hill Road: Boarding Houses, Social Interaction, and the Culture of Consumption at Smith College, 1892–1895," *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 5, no. 3 (2012): 359–92; Katie Day Good, "From Scrapbook to Facebook: A History of Personal Media Assemblage and Archives," *New Media and Society* 15, no. 4 (2013): 557–73. On albums that illustrate the performance of identities, see Tamar Katriel and Thomas Farrell, "Scrapbooks as Cultural Texts: An American Art of Memory," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (January 1991): 1–17; Isabelle Lehuu, *Carnival on the Page: Popular Print Media in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Samantha Matthews, "Psychological Crystal Palace? Late Victorian Confession Albums," *Book History* 3, no. 1 (2000): 125–54; Amelie Hastie, *Cupboards of Curiosity: Women, Recollection, and Film History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); Margaret F. Rosenthal, "Fashions of Friendship in an Early Modern Illustrated Album Amicorum: British Library, MS Egerton 1191," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 39, no. 3 (2009): 619–41; Jasmine Nichole Cobb, "'Forget Me Not': Free Black Women and Sentimentality," *MELUS* 40, no. 3 (2015): 28–46; Vosmeier, "Picturing Love and Friendship"; Dunbar, *Fragile Freedom*; Good, "From Scrapbook to Facebook."

[8] Anna Denov Rusk, "Collecting the Confederacy: The Civil War Scrapbook of Henry M. Whitney," *Winterthur Portfolio* 47, no. 4 (2013): 267–96; Georganne Scheiner, "The Deanna Durbin Devotees: Fan Clubs and Spectatorship," in *Generations of Youth: Youth Cultures and History in Twentieth-Century America*, ed. Joe Alan Austin and Michael Willard (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 81–94; Good, "From Scrapbook to Facebook"; Vosmeier, "Picturing Love and Friendship"; Hamilton-Honey, "Girls of 83 Round Hill Road"; Rosenthal, "Fashions of Friendship"; Siegel, *Galleries of Friendship*; Stabile, *Memory's Daughters*; Dallow, "Treasures of the Mind."

[9] Garvey, *Adman*; Deborah A. Smith, "Consuming Passions: Scrapbooks and American Play," *Ephemera Journal* 6 (1993): 63–76. While some scholars have agreed with Garvey's argument about consumerism, others find that the objects served as educational tools that socialized women to their socially defined gender roles. See Rodris Roth, "Scrapbook Houses: A Late Nineteenth-Century Children's View of the American Home," in *The American Home: Material Culture, Domestic Space, and Family Life*, ed. Eleanor M. Thompson (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1998), 301–23; Ellen Gruber Garvey, "Dreaming in Commerce: Advertising Trade Card Scrapbooks," in *Acts of Possession: Collecting in America*, ed. Leah Dilworth (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 66–88; Meredith Eliassen, "In the Hands of Children: A Photographic Essay of Images from Children's Scrapbooks," in Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, *Scrapbook*, 193–206; Gordon, *Saturated World*; Guest, "Victorian Scrapbooks."

[10] Bartholomew Brinkman, "Scrapping Modernism: Marianne Moore and the Making of the Modern Collage Poem," *Modernism/Modernity* 18, no. 1 (2011): 43–66, and "Modern American Archives and Scrapbook Modernism," in *Cambridge Companion to Modern American Poetry*, ed. Walter B. Kalaidjian (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 23–36; Meredith L. McGill, "Common Places: Poetry, Illocality, and Temporal Dislocation in Thoreau's *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*," *American Literary History* 19, no. 2 (2007): 357–74.

[11] Ellen Gruber Garvey, "Scissorizing and Scrapbooks: Nineteenth-Century Reading, Remaking, and Recirculating," in *New Media, 1740–1915*, ed. Lisa Gitelman and Geoffrey B. Pingree (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 207–27; Garvey, *Writing with Scissors*; Karal Ann Marling, "Writing History with Artifacts: Columbus at the 1893 Chicago Fair," *Public Historian* 14, no. 4 (1992): 13–30; Clare Pettitt, "Topos, Taxonomy and Travel in Nineteenth-Century Women's Scrapbooks," in *Travel Writing, Visual Culture and Form, 1760–1900*, ed. Mary Henes and Brian H. Murray (New York: Macmillan, 2016), 21–41; Rusk, "Collecting the Confederacy"; Stabile, *Memory's Daughters*; Jolly, "History in the Making"; Amy Mecklenburg-Faenger, "Scissors, Paste and Social Change: The Rhetoric of Scrapbooks of Women's Organizations, 1875–1930" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2007); Scheiner, "Deanna Durbin Devotees"; Hastie, *Cupboards of Curiosity*. A few scholars working in material culture have discussed albums in terms of collecting, noting that the books represent efforts to own, control, and categorize experiences. See Ellen Gruber Garvey, "Scrapbook, Wish Book, Prayer Book: Trade-Card Scrapbooks and the Missionary Work of Advertising," in Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, *Scrapbook*, 97–115; Vosmeier, "Picturing Love and Friendship"; Gordon, *Saturated World*; Rusk, "Collecting the Confederacy."

[12] On memory, see Langford, *Suspended Conversations*; Tammy Powley, "Memory-Craft: The Role of Domestic Technology in Women's Journals" (PhD diss., University of Central Florida,

many scholars have viewed scrapbooking as historically a female and white middle-class pursuit.[13] Such narrow understandings of the practice stemmed from persistent gender hierarchies created in the nineteenth century that devalued women's craft activities and that have persistently colored historical research on the topic.[14] In spite of such myopia, an emerging contingent of material culture scholars has proven that scrapbooking was a multiclass, multiracial pursuit undertaken by both men and women.[15]

Likewise, in the historical literature on the antebellum period, discussions of the construction of separate public/commercial and private/personal spheres by middle-class tastemakers and reformers continue to proliferate despite evidence that multiple exceptions existed. Again, material culture scholars have advocated for more nuanced interpretations here, asserting the important ways that sentiment intruded into business and commerce and the ways that commercial culture intruded into the domestic sphere from the 1840s forward.[16] Examining trade cards, their collection in albums, and the function of both cards and albums as communicative objects helps to dispel lingering tropes about the separation of public and private in the nineteenth century.

Thus, trade cards were objects that did more than foreshadow the expansion of colorful advertising in magazines at the turn of the twentieth century.[17] Designed to transgress the boundaries of personal and commercial communication and chosen by album makers for their imagery and content, trade cards were inherently multivalent and multifunctional. In adopting visual and textual tropes of sentiment, the cards commodified sincerity and sentiment, transforming these into a consumable form of entertainment that could be used to build commercial reputations and cultivate sales. While some scholars argue that sentimentalism emerged as a response to market culture, this article argues that market culture co-opted sentiment for entertainment purposes, making consumption compatible with it; in fact, consumption became a viable tool for its expression. Sentimental gift exchange did not operate outside of market culture; rather, it wholly relied on it. Commodities became gifts from the producer to the consumer through the use of tropes on advertising trade cards.[18] It is only by resituating trade cards as collectible objects—not protomodern advertisements—that this becomes clear.

2006); Anne Blue Wills, "Mourning Becomes Hers: Women, Tradition, and Memory Albums," *Religion and American Culture* 20, no. 1 (2010): 93–121; Freund, "Personal Visual Albums"; Stabile, *Memory's Daughters*; Guest, "Victorian Scrapbooks"; Hamilton-Honey, "Girls of 83 Round Hill Road"; Pettitt, "Topos, Taxonomy."

[13] Scholars whose interpretation of this practice highlights its gendered (and feminine) elements include Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion*; Ockenga, *On Women and Friendship*; Garvey, *Adman*. However, it should be noted that in her later work, Garvey stresses the equal participation of both men and women in the practice of creating scrapbooks and albums; see *Writing with Scissors*, 10. Finally, Mary Blake, in *Twenty-Six Hours a Day* (Boston: Lothrop, 1883), also encourages mothers to keep/make scrapbooks—as presents for children and as educational devices (147)—evidence that directly contradicts the prevailing assumption among many scholars that scrapbooks were made and kept primarily by children.

[14] Amy Mecklenburg-Faenger has argued that nineteenth-century ideas about high/low art and gender continue to cloud scholars' understanding of scrapbooks as an art form, as an educational and intellectual practice, and as a mode of rhetorical production. See "Trifles, Abominations, and Literary Gossip: Gendered Rhetoric and Nineteenth-Century Scrapbooks," *Genders* 55 (2012), http://www.colorado.edu/gendersarchive1998-2013/2012/02/01/trifles-abominations-and-literary-gossip-gendered-rhetoric-and-nineteenth-century. This argument echoes that made in 1987 by Anne Higonnet, who asserted that women's album making was the rightful precursor to the modern artistic practice of collage. See "Secluded Vision: Images of Feminine Experience in Nineteenth-Century Europe," *Radical History Review* 38 (1987): 16–36; Lynda Roscoe Hartigan, "The House That Collage Built," *American Art* 7, no. 3 (1993): 88–91; Gordon, *Saturated World*, 61.

[15] Garvey provides evidence of the multiclass and multiracial audiences of scrapbooking and trade card collecting in *Writing with Scissors*, esp. chap. 4. See also Cobb, "Forget Me Not," 28–46. Scholars who note that men (and boys) also scrapbooked include Garvey in *Writing with Scissors*; Dallow, "Treasures of the Mind"; Rusk, "Collecting the Confederacy." See also the tokens preserved in the Charles Swain/Ruckman Family Papers, Bucks County, PA, ca. 1850–1950, box 11, col. 798, Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library, Winterthur, DE (hereafter DCWL); several scrapbooks composed by men in col. 669, DCWL.

[16] On the doctrine of separate spheres, see Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1977). On material culture examples that contradict this doctrine, see, e.g., Nancy Bercaw, "Solid Objects/Mutable Meanings: Fancywork and the Construction of Bourgeois Culture, 1840–1880," *Winterthur Portfolio* 26, no. 4 (1991): 231–47; Elizabeth White Nelson, *Market Sentiments: Middle-Class Market Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2004). The argument about commerce intruding into the home is also made by Garvey in *Adman*; Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865–1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

[17] One key argument made by Garvey in *Adman* is that trade card collecting in scrapbooks socialized women and children to the interplay between text and image characteristic of magazine advertising in the early twentieth century.

[18] Nelson argues that middle-class men and women used sentimental ideals to resolve the contradictions of market culture, developing a "sentimental pragmatism" to define the market relations of both production and consumption in moral terms. See *Market Sentiments*, 6. In this way, Nelson is responding to the assertion by James Carrier, who argued that, as Western societies industrialized and production processes (and by extension, the commodities that resulted) became more impersonal, the home became a "beleaguered personal sphere." Carrier asserts that this caused anxious Americans to invest gifts with personal meaning and emotion. See *Gifts and Commodities: Exchange and Western Capitalism since 1700* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 156.

The "Chromo Craze"

By the time Lizzie Cadmus received her album in 1877, the United States had already witnessed a tremendous boom in industrial production and economic growth. After the Civil War, expanding transportation and communication networks intensified the process of integrating the national market that began during the antebellum years. As industry boomed, per capita incomes and the spending ability of American consumers rose.[19] Expanding distribution networks brought more rural areas into the scope of the national market, making mass-produced household consumables more available to the nation's interior.[20] During the nineteenth century, shopping shifted for consumers from an experience rooted in conversation with the local retailer and consumption of generic local goods to one characterized by flashy packaging and appeals from often faceless manufacturers clamoring for the consumer's attention in colorful printed advertisements.

By 1870 the nature and appearance of advertisements had also shifted. Before the Civil War, the cost of commissioning and printing engravings and woodcuts (and restrictions on "display advertising" in the penny press) limited the widespread use of images in advertisements.[21] Trade cards in the form of engraved and letterpress printed cards that contained contact information and were distributed locally by tradesmen, such as silversmiths and cabinetmakers, had been used in North America since the eighteenth century. In the decades surrounding the Revolution, each card had to be individually designed, making the product relatively expensive.[22] As such, many advertisers tended to replicate the text they might use in a newspaper advertisement on the trade card, as in T. B. Jansen and Company's card from around 1800 (fig. 5). The text-heavy appearance of Jansen's card, adorned only by simple asterisks, is typical of an early nineteenth-century advertising culture that was largely (although not entirely) devoid of illustrations. Throughout the Revolutionary and antebellum decades, trade cards like this captured a moment of interpersonal interaction much like paper money did: registering personal contact as it passed from one person to the next but addressing potential viewers as a "group of largely undifferentiated consumers."[23]

After 1870, developments in printing technologies, most notably the growth of lithography, helped change the character of advertising by reducing the costs of printing images and elevating their overall importance to the trade. Entertaining and familiar images from popular culture soon began appearing—often in full color—in advertisements designed to be collected and saved by patrons. Far from the cheaply printed handbills that littered the gutters of the antebellum city, the new and colorful trade cards and posters of the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s could be bought, traded, and collected directly from manufacturers who offered them as premiums and gifts to loyal patrons. As printer Thomas Donnelley would summarize later, properly chosen images served to "hook" the viewers and draw not only their attention but favorable opinions that might then be transferred to the product for sale.[24] The new accessibility of color printing thus transformed advertising forever. Yet understanding the popularity of trade cards, as well as their impact on American visual culture and especially advertising, requires comprehension of both the cultural currency of colorful pictures as tools of taste making and the ways that these images were used as objects of personal expression.

America's fascination with colorful pictures began several decades earlier, with the introduction

[19] These developments are outlined most efficiently by Rebecca Edwards, *New Spirits: Americans in the Gilded Age, 1865–1905* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Norris, *Advertising*.

[20] Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed*, 28. For decades, historians have argued that the last quarter of the nineteenth century spawned the birth of America's consumer society, ushered in by the growth of advertising in the same period (as most famously proposed by Daniel Pope in *The Making of Modern Advertising* [New York: Basic, 1983]). Recent studies suggest such developments had their roots in the antebellum period, however: Joanna Cohen has used advertising imagery to suggest that a turn toward consumerism in the 1840s marked the beginnings of a "burgeoning consumer culture" characterized by the promotion of consumption as a pleasurable experience. See "Promoting Pleasure as Political Economy: The Transformation of American Advertising, 1800–1850," *Winterthur Portfolio* 48, nos. 2/3 (2014): 188. Cohen's reperiodization of consumer culture echoes arguments (also based on a reading of advertisements) made by Wendy Woloson, "The Rise of the Consumer in the Age of Jackson," in *A Companion to the Era of Andrew Jackson*, ed. Sean Patrick Adams (New York: Blackwell, 2013), 489–508.

[21] Juliann Sivulka, *Soap, Sex, and Cigarettes: A Cultural History of American Advertising* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1998), 8–17; Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed*, 90.

[22] Jay, *Trade Card*, 1–3. See also Philippa Hubbard, "The Art of Advertising: Trade Cards in Eighteenth-Century Consumer Cultures" (PhD diss., University of Warwick, 2009).

[23] David Henkin, *City Reading: Written Words and Public Spaces in Antebellum New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 73.

[24] Thomas Donnelley, "The Application of Art, So Called, to Advertising," *Printers' Ink* 5, no. 14 (October 1891): 364–65. See also Lewis Saxby, "The Genius of Pictorial Advertising," *Printers' Ink* 11, no. 19 (November 1894): 804; "The Picture Habit," *Printers' Ink* 17, no. 13 (December 1896): 3–4; Jay T. Last, *The Color Explosion: Nineteenth Century American Lithography* (Santa Ana, CA: Hillcrest, 2006); Garvey, *Adman*, 49; Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed*, 91.

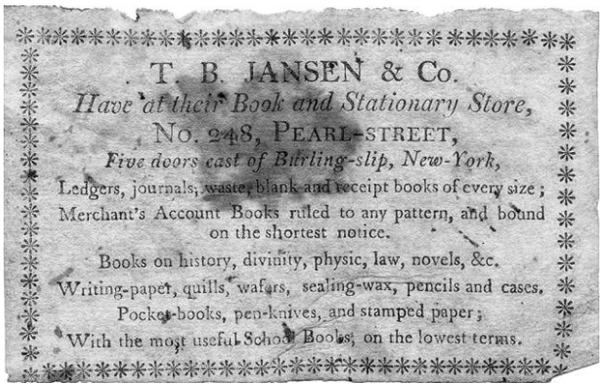


Fig. 5. Trade card, T. B. Jansen and Co., booksellers and stationers, New York, ca. 1800. Engraving; H. 2½″, W. 3½″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

of color lithography to the United States in the 1830s.[25] The popularity of collecting lithographic prints rose in the 1850s and 1860s and grew to dramatic proportions in the last quarter of the century when "chromos"—an abbreviation of chromo- or color lithographs—became all the rage among middle- and lower-middle-class consumers.[26] Key developments in the printing process allowed for more efficient and higher-volume outputs in the 1850s, while the falling price of paper in the 1870s enabled the large-scale distribution of cheap and free chromolithographs to the American public. Moreover, during the Civil War the market for chromolithographs expanded as the public demanded information about the war and war-related themes: several lithographers built their businesses in these years by producing lithographs of military camps, battles, portraits of political and military leaders, and sheet music covers with patriotic themes.[27] Finally, the absence of color printing in the magazine industry at midcentury allowed chromolithographic firms to become the primary suppliers of cheap novelty images to a public yearning for a colorful oasis from the newspapers, handbills, magazines, and other black-and-white media circulating in American culture.[28]

Reproductions of famous artworks and other large-scale chromolithographs especially appealed to members of the middle class, who self-consciously demonstrated their class identity through the objects on display in their parlors. The demographic and economic changes of the pre–Civil War years had facilitated the rise of an urban middle class that expressed anxieties about the encroaching social mobility of the lower orders. By cultivating an ideal of transparent self-display, which historians have called "sincerity," a socially mobile group of merchants and industrialists increasingly sought to differentiate themselves from the lower classes by emulating the genteel manners of high society. They institutionalized strict codes of dress, conduct, and correspondence to ensure complete transparency of character in personal and professional address and codified separate spheres for men and women through the cult of domesticity.[29] Etiquette manuals instructed men and women on how to demonstrate

[25] Imported chromos and chromo scraps (such as the letters pictured in fig. 49) were available in the United States as early as the 1830s, according to Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, *Scrapbook*, 7. On the history of lithography, and especially trade cards, in the United States, see J. R. Burdick, *The American Card Catalog: The Standard Guide on All Collected Cards and Their Values* (New York: Nostalgia, 1967), 14–15; Katharine Morrison McClinton, *The Chromolithographs of Louis Prang* (New York: Potter, 1973), 59–60; Last, *Color Explosion*, 244; Jay, *Trade Card*, 1–3.

[26] Georgia Barnhill and Lauren Hewes, "Early American Prints," and "Chromolithography" (lectures, CHAViC summer seminar, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA, June 2010). The lithographic process works by applying a grease or oil treatment to a porous stone, then inking the stone (the grease repels the ink, so that it only sticks to certain ungreased areas of the design) and using the stone as a printing plate to make an image on paper. Barnhill and Hewes note that curators distinguish between "color" lithography and "chromolithography" as an indication of the level of expense and effort put into producing a print, so that in color lithographs the inks are printed side by side on the paper (a cheaper and faster process), and in chromolithography the inks overlap (a more sophisticated and expensive process).

[27] See Louis Prang collections at the Prints and Photographs Room, Library of Congress (hereafter LOC PP), and Jay T. Last Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA (hereafter Last HL); Last, *Color Explosion*, 21, 66–67; James Harvey Young, *The Toadstool Millionaires: A Social History of Patent Medicines in America before Federal Regulation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 100.

[28] Last, *Color Explosion*, 22–26; Laird, *Advertising Progress*, 83; Laura Anne Kalba, *Color in the Age of Impressionism: Commerce, Technology, and Art* (Philadelphia: Penn State University Press, 2017); Peter C. Marzio, *The Democratic Art: Pictures for a Nineteenth-Century America; Chromolithography, 1840–1900* (Boston: Godine, 1979).

[29] Linda Kerber provides a good overview of the scholarship on the cult of domesticity, including changing historical understandings of the concept of separate spheres since the early nineteenth century, in "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *Journal of American History* 75, no. 1 (1988): 9–39. On formulations of the concept of character in the nineteenth century, see Douglas, *Feminization of American Culture*; Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830–1870* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), chaps. 3–5; John F. Kasson, *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1990); C. Dallett Hemphill, *Bowing to Necessities: A History of Manners in America, 1620–1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Judy Hilkey, *Character Is Capital: Success Manuals and Manhood in Gilded Age America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997). Manners and etiquette have provided a primary platform for class differentiation throughout the history of Western civilization, as a variety of scholars have argued. Norbert Elias first explained the connection in 1939, arguing that an ever-expanding "threshold of embarrassment" gradually defined previously acceptable public

appropriately classed and gendered character in all modes of social interaction—structuring, with rigid ceremony, everything from dinner invitations and formal greetings to business transactions and even thoughtful notes between family members. In the home, furnishings and other material objects became invested with culturally significant properties that conveyed a family's sincerity and status. Through material possessions, behavior, fashion, and manners, middle-class Americans thus performed their culturally defined class and gender identities.[30]

According to cultural tastemakers, carefully chosen pictures and other objects would uplift the family while fortifying its quest for propriety and gentility. In offering her advice on the subject in 1869, Harriet Beecher Stowe framed chromolithographs as objects that democratized fine art consumption. Such tools would help cultivate a family's taste, Stowe argued, noting that "a respectable engraving that truly is *felt* by the family as an artistic pleasure is a better thing for them than a much higher one that they do not understand or care for."[31] She suggested that a family need not spend its savings on fine art for the parlor; well-selected chromos clearly offered an affordable alternative with just as much (if not more) benefit. With Stowe's endorsement, the popularity of this new art of chromolithography grew exponentially. Chromolithographs came to hold a form of cultural currency—a value that connected the objects to status display and distinction—which resulted in high demand from consumers.[32] Stowe encouraged consuming the chromos in order to properly demonstrate one's sentiment and class: admission to the middle class could be achieved in part by acquiring and displaying the right material possessions. The public's unquenchable thirst for these colorful prints thus meant that there were plenty of profits to be earned in the production and sale of chromolithographs. The enterprising printer only needed to find his niche in the market before exploiting it—and that is just what German-born lithographer Louis Prang did.

Prang found success making reproductions of famous art works in the 1850s and 1860s and expanded his operation to include prints by local artists on sentimental topics during the Civil War. Two examples of Prang's prints of young girls in natural settings by artist J. G. Brown in 1867 illustrate the ways that sentiment could be represented in figurative and iconographic form (figs. 6 and 7). Each print depicts a girl framed by leaves and foliage, gazing politely at the viewer through friendly brown eyes. The girls' plump, rosy cheeks and clean, pretty clothes reveal their status as members of the middle class, making these portraits of childhood innocence perfect examples of the kinds of pictures that Stowe advocated for the middle-class home. In fact, Stowe offered her praise for Prang's work in a published endorsement in 1868, pledging her continued support for Prang's "charming and beautiful mission."[33] In the same years, Prang experimented with small-scale "album cards." These 2 by 4 inch prints contained chromolithographed images of flowers, birds, leaves, and other plants and were commonly sold in sets of twelve (fig. 8). Introducing the cards in 1864, Prang intended these for collection in the patented *Prang's American Card Album*, a leather-bound scrapbook with precut slits

behavior as inappropriate among the courtly aristocracy in the early modern period. As the bourgeoisie (and later, the lower classes) sought to emulate these manners, a process of socialization compelled adherence to "civil" behavior that characterized adult life. See *The Civilizing Process*, vol. 1, *The History of Manners* (1939; repr., New York: Blackwell, 1978). More recent scholars have revised Elias's periodization: Hemphill, *Bowing to Necessities*, suggests this cultural emphasis on manners emerged in the Revolutionary period, while Halttunen, *Confidence Men* (calling it sentimentalism or sincerity), and Kasson, *Rudeness and Civility* (calling it respectability and propriety), point to the antebellum years for the same development. Scholars also differ on the decline of this phenomenon: while Halttunen finds the decline in the Civil War years, Kasson's treatment takes the persistence of the cult of manners through the end of the century. My research generally supports Kasson's claim that these ideals persisted through the Gilded Age.

[30] Kenneth Ames, *Death in the Dining Room and Other Tales of Victorian Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), chap. 1; Katherine Grier, *Culture and Comfort: Parlor Making and Middle-Class Identity, 1850–1930* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1997). Jasmine Nichole Cobb asserts that middle-class identity was also performed by African Americans in similar ways, in *Picture Freedom: Remaking Black Visuality in the Early Nineteenth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 2015).

[31] Harriet Beecher Stowe, "What Pictures Shall I Hang on My Walls?" in *Atlantic Almanac for 1869*, ed. Donald G. Mitchell (Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1868), 43. Stowe may have been responding to critiques of Prang's chromos by art critics such as Clarence Cook, who in 1866 wrote that Prang's chromos were "intended for an uncritical market." The diatribe prompted an exchange between Cook and Prang in the pages of the *New York Tribune*, which Prang later reproduced (presumably in its entirety, although I have been unable to locate the original in the *Tribune*) in his serial publication *Prang's Chromo* 1, no. 2 (1868): 2, LOC PP. Prang also commented on the episode in the remnants of his undated autobiographical manuscript, in Louis Prang Papers, Last HL.

[32] On the popularity of chromolithographs in the postwar period, see McClinton, *Chromolithographs of Louis Prang*; Last, *Color Explosion*; Mary Sittig, "L. Prang & Company, Fine Art Publishers" (master's thesis, George Washington University, 1970); Laura Groves Napolitano, "Nurturing Change: Lilly Martin Spencer's Images of Children" (PhD diss., University of Maryland College Park, 2008), chap. 4.

[33] Harriet Beecher Stowe to Louis Prang, January 20, 1867, reprinted as "Mrs. Stowe on Prang's Chromos," *Prang's Chromo: A Journal of Popular Art* 1, no. 1 (January 1868): 2, in LOC PP.

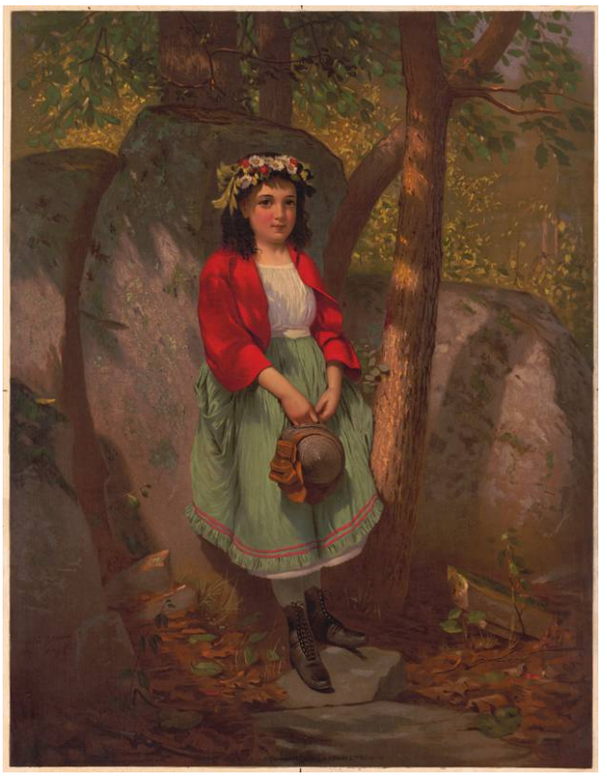


Fig. 6. J. G. Brown, "The Flowers in Her Hair," 1867. Louis Prang and Co., Boston. Chromolithograph, J. Howard Collier. (LC-DIG-pga-07891, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.)

Fig. 7. J. G. Brown, "Little Bo Peep," 1867. Louis Prang and Co., Boston. Chromolithograph, J. Howard Collier. (LC-DIG-pga-07898, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.)

to hold the cards.[34] Prang found almost immediate success with the cards, selling, by his own estimation, several hundred thousand of the twelve packs in the first four years and seeing them on display in the "show windows of print and fancy shops" throughout the United States and in the United Kingdom.[35] In the album card, Prang capitalized on the popularity of collecting chromos and combined an appeal to a culture of exchange and album keeping (as discussed below). He thus astutely recognized the potential profits to be earned by selling handheld chromos for personal exchange and album use.

Emergence, Production, and Distribution of Chromolithographed Exchange Cards

Prang transformed the album card for commercial use when he began using chromolithographed cards as professional calling cards for his business, an act that earned him the title of inventor of the trade card in the minds of many twentieth-century historians (figs. 9 and 10). His cards brought together the sentimental imagery found in chromolithographed prints of the previous decade—and especially the floral tropes he had experimented with in the wildflower album cards (see fig. 8, especially the pansy card in the middle row, second from right)—and added a commercial message for Prang's business. Yet Prang's pioneering role in this story has been overstated. Although Prang had developed the framework for the emergence of the chromolithographed trade card in the decade before the centennial, he was not the inventor of the chromo trade card in 1876, despite the popular belief among many amateur collectors and some scholars that he was.[36] Rather, evidence points to the gradual development of the chromo trade card by a group of printers (in-

[34] Louis Prang, *Prang's American Card Album* (Boston: Prang, 1864), Louis Prang Papers, Last HL.

[35] "On Prang's American Chromos," reprinted from *Forney's Philadelphia Press*, in *Prang's Chromo: A Journal of Popular Art* 1, no. 1 (January 1868): 3, in LOC PP.

[36] See Ernest Dudley Chase, *The Romance of Greeting Cards* (1927; repr., Detroit: Tower, 1971); Marzio, *Democratic Art*; McClinton, *Chromolithographs of Louis Prang*; Sittig, "L. Prang & Company."

Fig. 8. Louis Prang and Co., Boston, "Wildflowers" album cards compiled in Prang's *American Card Album*, 1863–64. Chromolithographs; each H. 4″, W. 2″. (JLC_prg, Louis Prang Papers, Jay T. Last Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

cluding Prang) in the northeastern United States.[37] Therefore, despite his haste at copyrighting his designs, Prang's ingenuity was part of a larger trend among like lithographers, including Bufford and Sons and Forbes (both in Boston), who manufactured and distributed trade cards in the early 1870s.[38] These lithographers, like Prang, independently marketed and distributed their chromolithographed cards to stationers across the eastern seaboard, so that by the opening of the Philadelphia Exposition in 1876, the cards were widely available to consumers and collectors alike.[39]

The cards that Prang and other lithographers distributed in 1876 and the decades that followed shifted from the appearance and function of their text-heavy historical antecedents. Measuring approximately 3 by 5 inches, the cheaply printed and often colorful cards typically featured an image and a manufacturer's or retailer's name and location on the front side and product information, testimonials, or other solicitations on the reverse (figs. 11 and 12). Printers offered both custom designs and blank "stock" cards with generic designs that could be customized later via letterpress overprinting or ink stamp, as in the S. Life Boots and Shoes stamp. Stock cards allowed printers to reuse designs over and over again, printing later runs in fewer colors and on cheaper paper to save money, as shown by the use of the same stock image of a girl picking flowers for

[37] See 1875 trade card for Bufford and Sons, col. 838, DCWL; Bufford and Forbes Co. advertisements, 1885 and 1875, in Warshaw Collection of Business Americana (hereafter Warshaw), Series I Printing, Archives Center of the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC (hereafter AC NMAH). This evidence supports the argument made by Robert Jay, who notes that Prang adapted the album card for trade card use, citing the emergence of album cards in 1863 and noting that the centennial would have provided an excellent opportunity for publicizing these new trade cards. After winning an award at the 1873 Viennese Exhibition, Prang copyrighted his designs in the United States. See Jay, *Trade Card*, chap. 2; verified in the Copyright Office card catalog, housed at the Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

[38] Louis Prang Papers, and 1876 materials, both in Last HL, col. 838, DCWL; Jay, *Trade Card*, 28–29.

[39] Last, *Color Explosion*, 243–44. The overwhelming majority of trade cards viewed for this study date to 1876 and later, with the median in the mid-1880s and with quantities declining in the years just before 1900, in archival collections at HL, DCWL, AC NMAH, and the American Antiquarian Society (hereafter AAS).

Fig. 9. Louis Prang and Co., Boston, trade card for Rigaud and Co., perfumers, Paris, 1875. Chromolithograph; H. 2″, W. 4″. (John and Carolyn Grossman Collection, Winterthur Library.)

Fig. 10. Louis Prang and Co., trade card for Louis Prang and Co., Boston, 1875. Chromolithograph; H. 2″, W. 4″. (John and Carolyn Grossman Collection, Winterthur Library.)

both Reynolds Brothers Shoes and Carter's Plasters (fig. 13).[40] While expensive custom cards used an idiosyncratic range of images to advertise the product, stock cards relied on a common set of images designed specifically to appeal to consumers, including children, flowers, birds, and other small animals. Lithographers typically produced stock cards in series—that is, a set of similar designs, themes, and narratives that could be purchased singularly or as a set—and stock cards overwhelmingly dominated the supply of cards circulating on the market. Of the approximately 3,000 cards sampled for this study, 83 percent used stock images and overprinting, while 17 percent featured custom designs for nationally marketed products (see the appendix).[41]

Retailers and manufacturers distributed the cards as gifts to the public through a variety of avenues. The cards appeared on retail counters and as product package inserts, salesmen distributed cards with samples and catalogs along their routes, and consumers sent in coupons or premiums for additional cards. Indeed, the distribution channels for trade cards were varied and almost ubiquitous (fig. 14; see the appendix for details). Many cards positioned the ad as a gift when they included the phrase "compliments of" on their face, a phrase that transformed the card into a token of commerce that could be treasured by the consumer, as in the card for C. S. Price, druggist (fig. 15, showing a feminine hand and pink rose).[42] Moreover, Gilded Age retailers prefigured the twentieth-century practice of offering promotional material in their stores when they pledged the gift of additional cards for repeat patronage from the consumer. As one local retailer in Jackson, Michigan, promised, customers could avail themselves of "elegant advertising material, FREE" when ordering products from his store.[43] Likewise, the manufacturers of Mokaska Coffee encouraged children to save coffee wrappers and return them in exchange for a "big scrap album": "Ask your Aunties, cousins, and neighbors to buy our coffee and help you save the wrappers."[44] Enlisting the help of children to sell goods, Mokaska Coffee bribed consumers into purchasing more coffee by promising the "free" gift of adver-

[40] "Illuminated Business and Advertising Cards published by L. Prang and Company," Price List (Spring 1879), Louis Prang Papers, Last HL. See also Jay, *Trade Card*, chaps. 2–3; Smith, "Consuming Passions," 65. The cards in figs. 11 and 13 are clearly based on the same design, yet it is difficult to tell whether the card in fig. 11 (produced by Mayer, Merkel, and Ottmann) or the card in fig. 13 (produced by Wemple and Co.) is the copy. According to Last (*Color Explosion*, 112), Mayer, Merkel, and Ottmann produced "practically no stock cards" in their twenty-plus years of business. In contrast, Wemple and Co. was widely known for its stock designs (ibid., 239). A close visual analysis of the Mayer, Merkel, and Ottmann card and its depth of pictorial detail suggests that the Wemple card may have been a copy. However, it is also possible that both printers independently copied the design from a third source, perhaps even one in Europe. Unfortunately, conclusive evidence is not available at this time. I am grateful to Gigi Barnhill, curator emerita at AAS, for her thoughtful comments on the provenance of these images.

[41] Research culled from AC NMAH, HL, and DCWL. Laird estimates that there were approximately 30,000 stock images in circulation in the United States after 1870. See *Advertising Progress*, 79. Stock images are also discussed in Jay, *Trade Card*, chap. 4; Last, *Color Explosion*, 244; Burdick, *American Card Catalog*, 14; Louis Prang Papers, Last HL.

[42] Trade card advertisement for N. Peters, Bro. and Son, Dry Goods, Business Trade Cards Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA (hereafter BTC HL). Trade cards offered as gifts are also referenced in Smith, "Consuming Passions," 65; Dallow, "Treasures of the Mind," 20; Garvey, *Adman*, 30, 49.

[43] See trade cards for Linden Bloom Perfume, S. D. Sollers and Co., and Merrill and Mackintire's Stationers, ca. 1885, all BTC HL.

[44] Trade card advertisement for Mokaska Coffee, ca. 1880, box 1, col. 9, DCWL. Smith addresses the appeal to children in "Consuming Passions," 70.

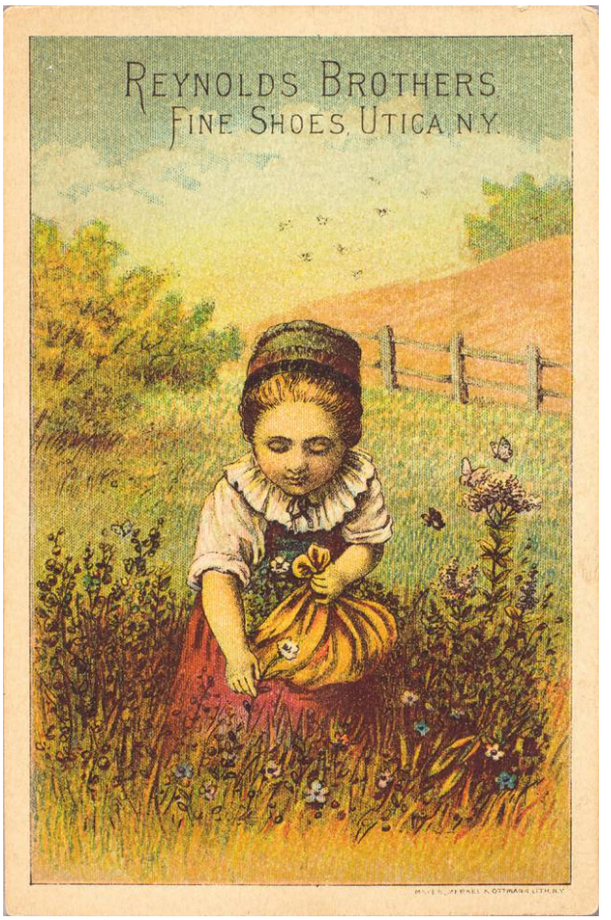


Fig. 11. Mayer, Merkel, and Ottmann, New York, trade card for Reynolds Brothers Fine Shoes, Utica, NY, ca. 1874–76. Chromolithograph with letterpress and ink-stamp additions; H. 4″, W. 3″. (ephBTM, Ephemera Collections, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

tising cards. Adopting the terminology of the gift enabled advertisers to mask their commercial intentions while appropriating elements from a culture of gift giving that depended on reciprocity. The gesture from the advertiser to the unnamed patron appears to be altruistic and personal, intended to cultivate a measure of guilt in the consumer, who would then feel obliged to repay the gift in some way.[45] This feeling of obligation, however minute, was reinforced by a possessive, materialist desire to obtain more cards, whose sheer volume would work to document individuals' financial worth (and thus class status) through their ability to consume. If a series was available only by collecting and sending in coupons or premiums,

[45] The ideology of gift giving in capitalistic society is explained more fully in Carrier, *Gifts and Commodities*, chap. 7.

Fig. 12. Reverse of figure 11 showing ink stamp for S. Life Boots and Shoes, Oberlin, OH. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

the consumer would be motivated to purchase increased quantities of the appropriate goods in order to obtain the coupons/premiums required to receive more trade cards.[46] In this way, advertising cards appropriated and deliberately manipulated cultural ideas associated with class identity and gift giving for commercial gain.

Trade Cards as Exchange Cards

Importantly, the popularity of trade cards as an advertising medium rested on the material and functional similarities between trade cards and other portable cards that circulated between individuals in the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s. Historical research on these objects has been shaped by the collection practices that preserved these materials in archival collections. The twenty-first-century archivist sorts these objects into categories based on their known or presumed function: "sentiment" cards expressed heartfelt emotions between friends, "trade" cards circulated as commercial advertisements, "calling" cards presented visitors to the host's home or provided a handy reference for contact information, "reward of merit" cards awarded students in recognition of special achievement, and "greeting" cards circulated in celebration of certain holidays or special occasions.[47] Yet these terms are misno-

[46] Trade card advertisement for Haddock's Cards, 1879, BTC HL.

[47] Maurice Rickards provides a thorough description of the appearance and uses of these and other material objects in the nineteenth-century United States in *The Encyclopedia of Ephemera: A Guide to the Fragmentary Documents of Everyday Life for the Collector, Curator, and Historian* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

Fig. 13. Wemple and Co., New York, trade card for Carter's Plasters, ca. 1874–76. Chromolithograph; H. 4″, W. 3″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

mers for how nineteenth-century individuals understood the function of these material objects. For nineteenth-century individuals, these were all simply "cards"—interchangeable and malleable objects that could be reused, repurposed, or appropriated for a variety of functions and occasions. Virtually no distinction was made among trade, greeting, calling, and other cards in contemporary speech.[48] Printers helped to create this medium flexibility by marketing their cards as generic communication devices, while consumers reinforced the cards' multipurpose nature when they improvised and augmented various interactions with cards. Referring to the group as "exchange cards" helps to emphasize both the shared material characteristics among trade, greeting, calling, and other nineteenth-century cards as well as their shared function as objects of personal and commercial exchange.

Although their handheld size and portability were standard, exchange cards appeared in varying styles and designs. Most often professionally printed or engraved, exchange cards, as a genre, could display black-and-white engravings, hand-painted details, calligraphy drawings, or chromolithographed images ranging from the simplest flower or ornament to very elaborate narrative sequences. In some cases the owner's or business's name or contact information appeared on the face of the card; in other cases the cards included popular verse and space for handwritten inscriptions of "to" and "from." Moreover, while the reverse was left blank on reward of merit cards, the reverses of trade, calling, greeting, and sentiment cards often bore inscriptions to recipients (as in the Standard Screw Fastened shoes card marked "For Leona"; fig. 16), printed information from manufacturers or retailers (in the case of trade cards), or even the occasional scribbled list or other hasty notation (figs. 17 and 18)—an indication of the ubiquitous presence of these cards in nineteenth-century culture.[49]

As a subcategory within the genre of exchange cards, chromolithographed trade cards borrowed heavily from the designs popularized on various types of exchange cards that circulated before the war and continued to be used through the end of the century. For example, Louis Prang designed and marketed chromo cards for multiple functions, such as visitation, advertising, greeting, and dinner seating.[50] As the Prang cards in figures 19 and 20 illustrate, an individual might receive the same card from a small retailer inviting her to patronize his store or a relative wishing her a happy New Year. In fact, Prang's designs were so

[48] Research conducted in the sales catalogs for trade cards, calling/visiting cards, and greeting cards at DCWL has demonstrated that stationers and printers referred to all of these various objects as "cards," regardless of the intended purpose or audience. See, e.g., Card Mills, Northford, CT, "Agent's Sample Book" (New York: Wemple & Kronheim, 1878), doc. 218; King Card Co., North Haven, CT, "Agent's sample book," ca. 1870, doc. 285, both DCWL. Moreover, etiquette guidebooks also elided distinctions between the objects, whose format and appearance was often indistinguishable to contemporaries. See, e.g., Abby Buchanan Longstreet, *Cards: Their Significance and Proper Uses, as Governed by the Usages of New York Society* (New York: Stokes, 1889).

[49] In the example here, the list appears to be an order for china and glass: the list includes toilet sets, decanters, wine glasses, tumblers, a mirror, and other items. Trade card for J. P. Drummond, New York City importer, ca. 1845, box 31, Advertising Ephemera Collection, John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising and Marketing History, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University. Other cards with list-like inscriptions can be found in the sentiment cards in col. 838, DCWL.

[50] Louis Prang to undisclosed client(s), November 30, 1876, Louis Prang Papers, Last HL; Barry Shank, *A Token of My Affection: Greeting Cards and American Business Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 96.

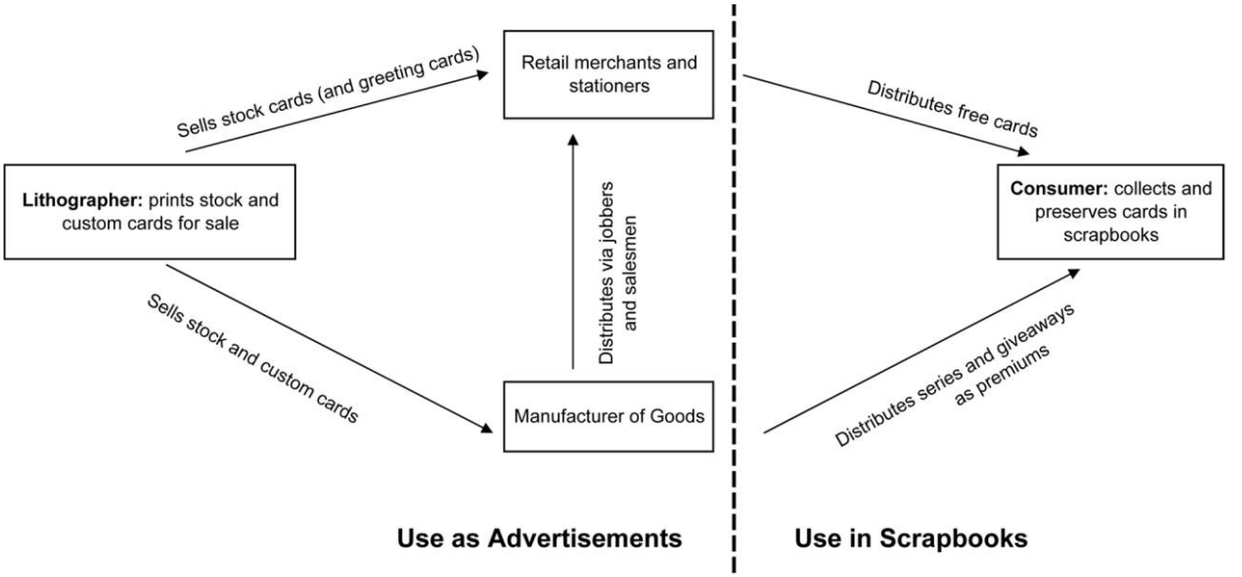


Fig. 14. Flow chart showing trade card distribution and use.

successful that other lithographers commonly copied their basic components when selling chromos for a variety of purposes (compare the calling card in fig. 3 with the Prang trade card in fig. 10). Thus marketed by printing houses and stationers to both the public and other retailers, the exchange cards that circulated as advertisements could also be purchased and used by individuals as personal calling cards, simple greeting cards, or other tokens of exchange. Such adaptation of chromolithographed exchange cards provided the objects with a sort of blank-slate quality, making them suitable for both personal and commercial purposes.

Primarily, trade cards acted as corporate calling cards in both their appearance and function: as exchange cards that circulated among manufacturers, retailers, and consumers, they communicated information about products and their sales.[51] Aside from sharing similar designs and appearances, both calling and trade cards shared similar functions. Since the eighteenth century, calling cards had facilitated interpersonal communication between visiting friends, while trade cards often bore the names and addresses of retailers or manufacturers and thereby provided important references to facilitate communication within America's commercial sector. In the nineteenth-century culture of sentimentalism and sociability, the proper use of calling cards became a material demonstration of one's character and propriety.[52] As etiquette expert Abby Longstreet counseled of choosing one's card in 1889, "Its fashioning … [is] an explanation of much of its owner's individuality."[53] Providing a surrogate for the owner's presence, exchange cards like these provided a secondary mode of publicly displaying oneself to others, making the cards a form of cultural currency that referenced and reinforced social networks.

Over time, trade cards came to act as similar references for the character of the manufacturer, as they often provided testimonials from satisfied customers and other validating information such as trademark or patent registrations. A wealth of cultural conventions governed the leaving and exchanging of calling cards, and here the function of trade cards also paralleled calling cards.[54] Yet while it became a courtesy to leave a card when calling on a friend or family member—an act that positioned the card as a remembrance of the visit itself—when visiting a department store or other shop the visitor would instead receive a trade card. In this

[51] Jennifer M. Black, "Corporate Calling Cards: Advertising Trade Cards and Logos in the United States, 1876–1890," *Journal of American Culture* 32, no. 4 (2009): 291–306.

[52] See, e.g., Halttunen, *Confidence Men*, chaps. 2 and 4. The practice of exchanging calling cards originated in continental Europe in the eighteenth century. See Rickards, *Encyclopedia of Ephemera*, 351.

[53] Longstreet, *Cards*, 3.

[54] Rickards, *Encyclopedia of Ephemera*, 351.

Fig. 15. Trade card for C. S. Price, druggist, Washington, DC, ca. 1890. Chromolithograph; H. 2″, W. 4″. (Archives Center Scrapbook Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.)

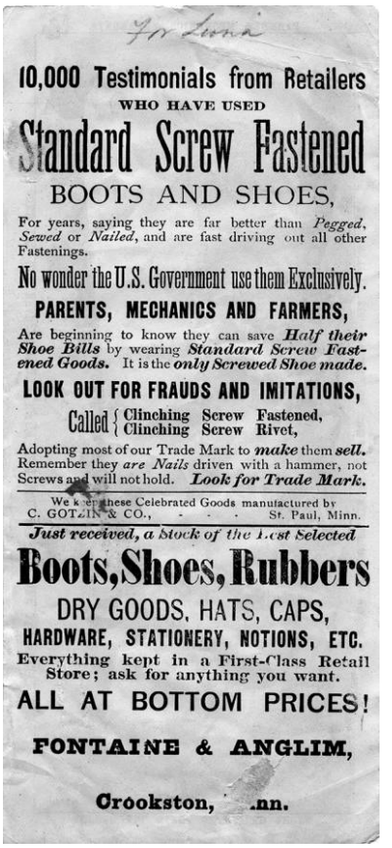


Fig. 16. Trade card for Standard Screw Fastened Shoes showing annotation "For Leona" at top, reverse, ca. 1880. Lithograph; H. 5″, W. 2″. (Warshaw Collection of Business Americana—Shoes, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.)

way, the trade card became a souvenir and reminder of the visit. But instead of referencing an interpersonal visit, it became a reference to commerce: to the store, the products, the retailer, and to shopping itself. Passed from person to person, advertising media like trade cards acted as representatives to the consumer on behalf of the manufacturer and were thought, by advertisers, to have as much impact on consumers as face-to-face interactions with traveling salesmen.[55]

Both calling cards and trade cards circulated between acquaintances and facilitated communication in the Gilded Age, but advertising trade cards also bore resemblance to other exchange cards that circulated in a reciprocal culture of gift giving. As early as the 1820s, young men and women exchanged small printed cards as indexes of intimate attachment, while school-age children received similar cards as rewards for scholastic achievement from instructors. Sentiment and reward of merit cards often bore a pictorial illustration or a short verse, and most surviving examples include handwritten inscriptions from the giver to the receiver, as in the example for Adaline from about 1840 (fig. 21). Sloppily hand painted, likely with watercolors, the card offers a brief verse about flowers, reminding the viewer of their symbolic importance (they are the "alphabet of angels").[56] Like the greeting cards that would become popular after 1875, printed tokens such as these were important "expressive objects" in the nineteenth-century culture of sentimentalism.[57] Greeting, sentiment, and reward of merit cards facilitated personal relationship building and emotional expression in America's modern industrializing society. They gave material weight to otherwise fleeting personal re-

[55] Jed Scarboro, "How to Make a Live Ad," *Printers' Ink* 9, no. 21 (November 1893): 541–42. Garvey suggests that cards were souvenirs of shopping in *Adman*, 46. On traveling salesmen, see Timothy B. Spears, "'All Things to All Men': The Commercial Traveler and the Rise of Modern Salesmanship," *American Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (1993): 536; Susan V. Spellman, "Trust Brokers: Traveling Grocery Salesmen and Confidence in Nineteenth-Century Trade," *Enterprise and Society* 13, no. 2 (2012): 276–312.

[56] Sentiment card inscribed "Adaline," ca. 1840, col. 838, DCWL. For general information on sentiment cards, see Rickards, *Encyclopedia of Ephemera*, 288. Additional information on the antebellum culture of exchange is expertly provided by Stabile in *Memory's Daughters*; Cassandra A. Good, *Founding Friendships: Friendships between Men and Women in the Early American Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[57] Shank, *Token of My Affection*, 41. See also n. 16.

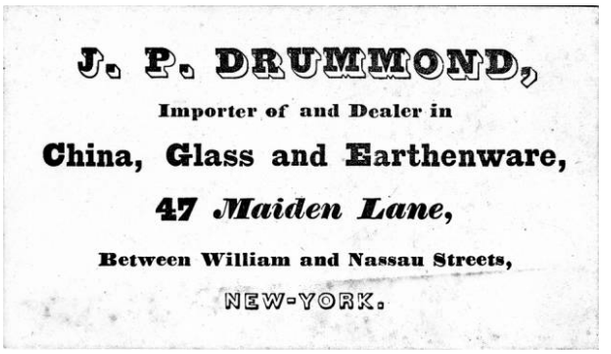


Fig. 17. Trade card for J. P. Drummond, china, glass, and earthenware importer and dealer, New York, ca. 1845. H. 1½″, W. 2½″. (Advertising Ephemera Collection, John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising, and Marketing History, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University.)

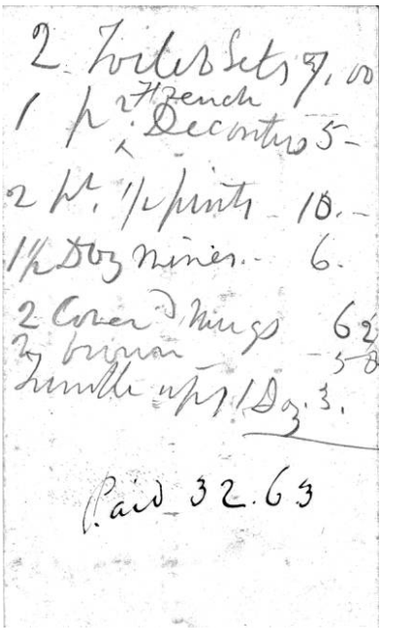


Fig. 18. Reverse of trade card in figure 17 showing improvised order for glass and ceramics.

lationships and helped nineteenth-century Americans feel more connected to the people around them.[58]

In 1876 when Prang modeled his professional trade cards after his designs for album cards, no doubt he also took inspiration from the sentiment cards that had been popular in his youth. On his trade card, the simple text box adorned by colorful flowers subtly mimics the floral iconography displayed on Adaline's sentiment card from a generation earlier. Yet in Prang's example, the emotionally expressive phrase has been replaced with a commercial address. The unsuspecting viewer might pick up the Prang card and, recognizing the floral design, expect to read a heartfelt message from a friend. For a moment, the viewer's familiarity with sentiment cards is transferred to the trade card, as the viewer registers the material object as a sentimental gift, before the commercial message interrupts his or her interpretation.

Like these other exchange cards, chromolithographed trade cards became important objects of personal expression by the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s. Men, women, and children in these years exchanged trade cards with letters between friends, as prized awards, and as tokens of sentiment just as calling cards were enclosed in letters, reward of merit cards were offered for achievement, and sentiment cards could be tokens of emotional expression.[59] Isabella Mayne, for example, recorded in her diary her mother's gift of "handsome" cards to a family friend in 1883, while other individuals presented trade cards to friends as tokens of sentiment and achievement—marking their exchange with inscriptions written on the reverse of such cards.[60] The trade card for Standard Screw Fastened shoes with "For Leona" on its reverse suggests that the card had been intended as a gift at one point in its lifetime. Like the sentiment card given to Adaline a generation earlier, this trade card signified the relationship between two individuals. As such, trade cards became both colorful collectibles and sentimental gifts that commemorated special occasions and relationships in nineteenth-century America. Adopting the trade card as a form of social and cultural currency, individuals used the objects to maintain social networks just as other objects had done in the antebellum years. They consumed trade cards just as they had other exchange cards—a practice that helped to erase, in some

[58] Ibid., 56.

[59] See, e.g., Camille Block album, 1875–87, doc. 35, DCWL; Charles Swain Papers, ca. 1840–65, box 11, col. 798, DCWL; Henderson Pownall Family Papers, 1788–1894, col. 48, DCWL; Charlotte Rose Commonplace Book, 1825–64, doc. 170, DCWL; Caroline Cowles Richards, diary entry for December 24, 1863, in *Village Life in America, 1852–1872*, ed. Margaret E. Sangster (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1913), 161. Sentimental gift giving and the reciprocal culture of exchange among women in the nineteenth century are visually documented in Ockenga, *On Women and Friendship*.

[60] Isabella Maud Mayne, diary entry for December 27, 1883, in *Maud*, ed. Richard Lee Strout (New York: Macmillian, 1939), 262. See also Shank, *Token of My Affection*, 97.

Fig. 19. Louis Prang and Co., Boston, trade card for Dr. Tucker's no. 59 Compound, 1878. Chromolithograph; H. 4″, W. 2″. (JLC_prg, Louis Prang Papers, Jay T. Last Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

Fig. 20. Louis Prang and Co., Boston, stock card used as a New Year's greeting card, 1878. Chromolithograph; H. 4″, W. 2″. (JLC_prg, Louis Prang Papers, Jay T. Last Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

measure, the commercial character of these cards and eased their fluctuation between commercial and personal use.

The Iconography of Trade Cards

Aside from format and appearance, the subjects pictured on trade cards became an integral component of their appeal. In designing trade cards, printers borrowed many of the same motifs that had appeared on the older exchange cards and were familiar to consumers, such as children, flowers, and to a lesser extent, birds and small animals. In many cases, these images formed thematic narratives or comical stories that aided their visual and entertaining appeal to consumers.

One dominant image used on stock and custom cards was children: 26 percent of the cards sampled for this study represent children at play, creating mischief, and in portrait with flowers (see the appendix).[61] Drawing on the popularity of prints such as Prang's "Little Bo Peep" at midcentury, lithographers and printers creating trade cards in the 1870s–90s invested in a variety of designs employing the iconographies endorsed earlier by Stowe and depicted by Prang. The cherubic faces of "Pinkham's Grandchildren" (fig. 22) match the rosy cheeks and smiling faces of the girls depicted by Prang in the 1860s, thus creating a visual association between the older antecedents and the newer, smaller chromos. The commercial appeal of Pinkham's card lies in these visual associations, in the linkages between Pinkham's products and the wholesome, altruistic sentiments expressed by Prang's chromo prints and Stowe's endorsements of the same.

Adopting images such as these helped shift the meanings of advertising trade cards away from their

[61] Illustrative examples of children in trade cards can be found on cards for Alexander's Shoes, 1881, and F. W. Tuttle, Dry Goods, 1880, both BTC HL.

Fig. 21. Sentiment card inscribed "Adaline," ca. 1840. Ink and watercolor on paper; H. ca. 1″, W. ca. 3″. (John and Carolyn Grossman Collection, Winterthur Library.)

original commercial purposes. Children signified those ideal virtuous qualities that adults prized most, including innocence and purity, and cards such as these overwhelmingly depicted white children dressed and posed according to the behavioral standards of the middle class. Since the antebellum period, the middle class had romanticized childhood as a period that should be sheltered from the harsh realities of modern urban life.[62] During the Gilded Age childhood became an even more important shelter as industry drew more and more working-class families into the factories. Play became a luxury and a marker of middle-class status, and representations of children in popular culture expressed these ideas by conveying nostalgia and playfulness.[63] If, as Katherine Grier has argued, images of children in public spaces served to domesticate and render the space suitable for middle-class, genteel audiences, then in advertisements images of childhood innocence diverted attention away from the initial commercial function of the trade card medium.[64] In the Pinkham card the youthful glow of the girls' plump cheeks connotes health and happiness, both qualities that would help validate the manufacturer's claims and reassure consumers of the medicinal benefits of using Pinkham's elixirs and tonics. Whether printers intended these images to be symbolic distractions or whether they were simply drawing on the most popular images of the day, in adopting pictures

[62] Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2004); Claire Perry, *Young America: Childhood in Nineteenth-Century Art and Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006).

[63] Jay, *Trade Card*, 93; T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture* (New York: Pantheon, 1981), 146–47, cited in Dallow, "Treasures of the Mind," 43.

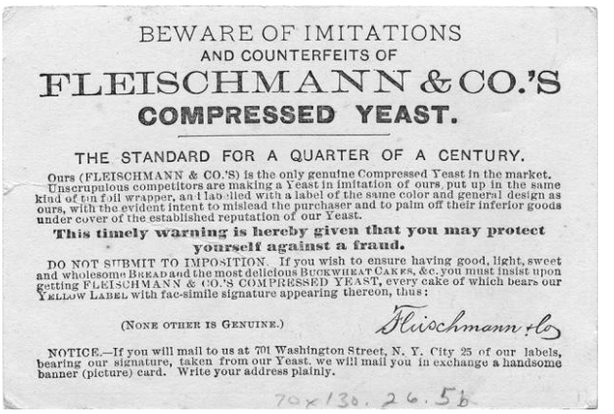
[64] Grier, *Culture and Comfort*, 25–43, 59.

Fig. 22. Knapp and Co., New York, "Lydia E. Pinkham's Grandchildren," trade card for Lydia Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, 1889. Chromolithograph; H. 4″, W. 3″. (John and Carolyn Grossman Collection, Winterthur Library.)

of children for trade cards, printers demonstrated a clear motive to appeal to the public on sentimental terms. Doing so allowed printers to establish rapport with potential customers through a shared set of cultural values established by the white middle class.

Apart from children, the second most popular motif to appear on trade cards was flowers (18 percent of the cards sampled here), arranged as single blooms, in large bouquets, and in wreaths (see the appendix). In one advertisement used by Fleischmann's Yeast (figs. 23 and 24), the card depicted a woman's bejeweled hand delicately holding a single red rose. Like many other popular designs in the 1880s, this card was marketed for personal use as a calling card or dinner card and for commercial use as a trade card; it may have even been part of a

Fig. 23. Trade card for Fleischmann's Yeast, ca. 1880. Chromolithograph; H. 2″, W. 4″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)


BEWARE OF IMITATIONS
AND COUNTERFEITS OF
FLEISCHMANN & CO.'S
COMPRESSED YEAST.

THE STANDARD FOR A QUARTER OF A CENTURY.

Ours (FLEISCHMANN & CO.'S) is the only genuine Compressed Yeast in the market. Unscrupulous competitors are making a Yeast in imitation of ours, put up in the same kind of tin foil wrapper, and labelled with a label of the same color and general design as ours, with the evident intent to mislead the purchaser and to palm off their inferior goods under cover of the established reputation of our Yeast.

This timely warning is hereby given that you may protect yourself against a fraud.

DO NOT SUBMIT TO IMPOSITION. If you wish to ensure having good, light, sweet and wholesome Bread and the most delicious Buckwheat Cakes, &c, you must insist upon getting Fleischmann & Co.'s Compressed Yeast, every cake of which bears our Yellow Label with fac-simile signature appearing thereon, thus:

(None other is Genuine.) *Fleischmann & Co*

NOTICE.—If you will mail to us at 701 Washington Street, N. Y. City 25 of our labels, bearing our signature, taken from our Yeast, we will mail you in exchange a handsome banner (picture) card. Write your address plainly.

70x130.26.5b

Fig. 24. Reverse of trade card in figure 23.

rose series similar to the Card Mills Daisy Series shown in figures 25 and 26. The similarities between the Fleischmann's (hand holding red rose), Daisy Series (hand holding daisy), and C. S. Price (hand writing with pink rose) stock cards are remarkable: the floating hand, hovering over a blank space, is adorned with a white blouse and flowers. While the reverse of these other cards is blank, the reverse of the Fleischmann's card warns the reader against counterfeit or imitation products that might defraud and confuse and directs the potential consumer to the Fleischmann signature appearing on all packaging, without which "none other is genuine."[65] The card borrows a common symbolism, or language, of flowers on the front side to underscore the manufacturer's altruism and thus alleviate the problem of counterfeits described in the card's text.

As they are today, flowers were a popular commodity in the nineteenth century and held a crucial role in the culture of emotional expression. From short expositions and treatises published in popular magazines, such as *Godey's Lady's Book*, to popular literary annuals known as gift books, flowers and their language became a cultural fascination from the 1820s through 1900.[66] Linked to the female pastime of creating fancywork, flowers became emblematic of sentimental emotions, such as devotion and friendship, and figured frequently in Victorian gift giving, album writing, and reciprocal exchange.[67] In albums, flowers and images of flowers served to augment written verse through their association with such emotions. In Camille Block's album, for example (fig. 27), the writer has asked Camille to look upon the flowers she or he has drawn and remember their friendship. "Ma Chère Camille," the passage begins, in French. The poem links flowers, friendship, and memory, making the page itself a sentimental gift.[68] The entry draws on the visual imagery of flowers to supplement the textual references to devotion, in ways not unlike the inclusion of actual pressed flowers in friendship albums (fig. 28). Given this cultural

[65] Trade card for Fleischmann's Yeast, ca. 1880, no. 26, col. 669, DCWL.

[66] While Dallow ("Treasures of the Mind," 46) attributes the popularity of flowers as a representational trope to the Victorian penchant for gardening, my research has linked this trope more closely to the popularity of gift books on the topic. See, e.g., H. T. Tuckerman, "Flowers," *Godey's Lady's Book* (January 1850); "The Language of Flowers," *Godey's Lady's Book* (April–October 1868). On gift books, see Frederick W. Faxon, *Literary Annuals and Gift Books: A Bibliography, 1823–1903* (1923; repr., Pinner: Private Libraries Association, 1973), xii; Ralph Thompson, *American Literary Annuals and Gift Books, 1825–1865* (New York: Wilson, 1936), 3–4; Jack Goody, *The Culture of Flowers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 235, 238; Alison Klaum, "Seeing Botanically: Linnaean Influence in Popular Antebellum Flower Books and the Library Company of Philadelphia's Visual Collections," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 79, no. 3 (2012): 298–314. I am grateful to Alison Klaum for sharing her dissertation research with me early in the research phase of this project.

[67] Fancywork was a female domestic pastime linked to craft production in the nineteenth century. In producing it, women used paper, natural materials, wax, and human hair to create statuettes, wall hangings, woven gifts, and the like. Bercaw provides an excellent overview of fancywork in "Solid Objects/Mutable Meanings," 231–47; Nelson examines the ways in which the practice was linked to market culture in *Market Sentiments*, esp. chap. 6. See also C. S. Jones, *Ladies' Fancy Work: Hints and Helps to Home Taste and Recreations*, Williams' Household Series, vol. 3. (New York: Williams, 1876).

[68] Historians have demonstrated that text and image worked together in friendship albums as sentimental gifts from the writer to the recipient. See Karen Sanchez-Eppler, "Copying and Conversion: An 1824 Friendship Album 'from a Chinese Youth,'" *American Quarterly* 59, no. 2 (2007): 301; Rosenthal, "Fashions of Friendship," 624.

Fig. 25. Daisy Series calling card. From Card Mills, *Agent Sample Book* (Northford, CT: Card Mills, 1878). Chromolithograph; H. 2″, W. 4″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

fascination with flowers, it is easy to see why Prang's wildflowers album cards became so popular at midcentury.

Flowers thus aided individuals in symbolically conveying their sentiment to others; the language of flowers provided a codified set of expressions and emotions demonstrated through specific blossoms, their colors, and their placement. The crocus, for example, symbolized "youthful gladness," while the coral honeysuckle displayed "fidelity," and the primrose encouraged "confidence."[69] Complicated rules regulated the use of flowers in representation, and changing the placement of the floral image changed its meaning. Tilting the flower to the left or right, for example, allowed the user to alter its message: signifying "I or me" by inclining the flower to the right, and "you" by inclining the flower to the left.[70] In these ways, flowers and their sentimental language provided an iconography for communicating emotional expression through objects and images, one that became so common by 1880 that short explanations and ready-reference tables regularly appeared in almanacs and other reference publications.[71]

While album makers rarely interpreted the floral iconography on trade cards in written form, the language of flowers can be used to decode such cards. In the card for Fleischmann's Yeast, the red rose offered by the floating hand can thus be read through its iconography. Robert Tyas, in his 1875 treatise on the language of flowers, suggested that a rosebud shown with its thorns and leaves tilted to the left would express purity and confidence marked by neither fear nor hope.[72] This particular card for Fleischmann's Yeast could thus be read as visually encouraging the consumer's confidence in Fleischmann's, which would be supported by the textual references to the integrity of the product and of the Fleischmann name on the reverse of the card. Moreover, the delicate hand offering the single bloom not only mimicked actual social practices in the reciprocal culture of gift giving, but it provided a surrogate for the giver's physical presence, further personalizing the friendly gesture embodied in the card itself. Like the flower being offered by the hand in the image, the card itself was offered as a gift from Fleischmann's to the recipient, much like C. S. Price's "compliments" card showing a hand writing and pink rose. In this way, iconography and text

[69] Sarah J. Hale, *Flora's Interpreter* (Boston: Marsh, Capen & Lyon, 1832), cited in Ockenga, *On Women and Friendship*, 196–97. However, Alison Klaum notes that meanings sometimes varied from one floral gift book to another, depending on the publisher. See "Pressing Flowers: Botanical Sights, Floral Reproductions, and the Shaping of Early American Discourse" (PhD diss. in progress, University of Delaware).

[70] Robert Tyas, *The Language of Flowers; or, Floral Emblems of Thoughts, Feelings, and Sentiments* (London: Routledge, 1875), x–xi.

[71] *Bristol's Illustrated Almanac* (1875), Rare Books, HL; Goody, *Culture of Flowers*, 267–68. Buckler and Leeper note that women often used flowers "in art works and gardens to represent order, control, renewal, dreams, and personal existence." "Antebellum Woman's Scrapbook," 6, citing Susan S. Arpad, "'Pretty Much to Suit Ourselves': Midwestern Women Naming Experience through Domestic Arts," in *Making the Home: Middle-Class Women and Domestic Material Culture, 1840–1940*, ed. Marilyn F. Motz and Pat Browne (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1988), 16, 24.

[72] Tyas, *Language of Flowers*, x–xi; Goody, *Culture of Flowers*, 235.

Fig. 26. Detail of page from Burt Carr album, 1883–1924, showing Daisy Series calling card for Sarah E. Clarke. Collage; H. ca. 8⅝″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

worked in tandem on the trade card to both appropriate and reinforce the principles of sentiment for commercial purposes.

Examples like these were not unique; hands appeared frequently on calling and visiting cards, especially toward the end of the century, and also communicated specific meanings to viewers. Cards including clasped or extended hands symbolized a union or joint relationship and translated into gestures of partnership, cooperation, and fellowship.[73] As a gesture of friendship, clasped hands amplified the existing messages of devotion or purity that might occupy the faces of exchange cards, thereby reinforcing the overall iconographic program that situated these cards firmly within the realm of intimate address and masked the commercial intent of the advertisement. Yet clasped hands also served to subtly reinforce racial arguments regarding middle-class belonging in the nineteenth century. White hands reaching out to shake other white hands, when used as a universal symbol for friendship, categorically excluded African Amer-

[73] Herman Roodenburg, "The 'Hand of Friendship': Shaking Hands and Other Gestures in the Dutch Republic," in *A Cultural History of Gesture*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 152–89; Ames, *Death in the Dining Room*, 135.

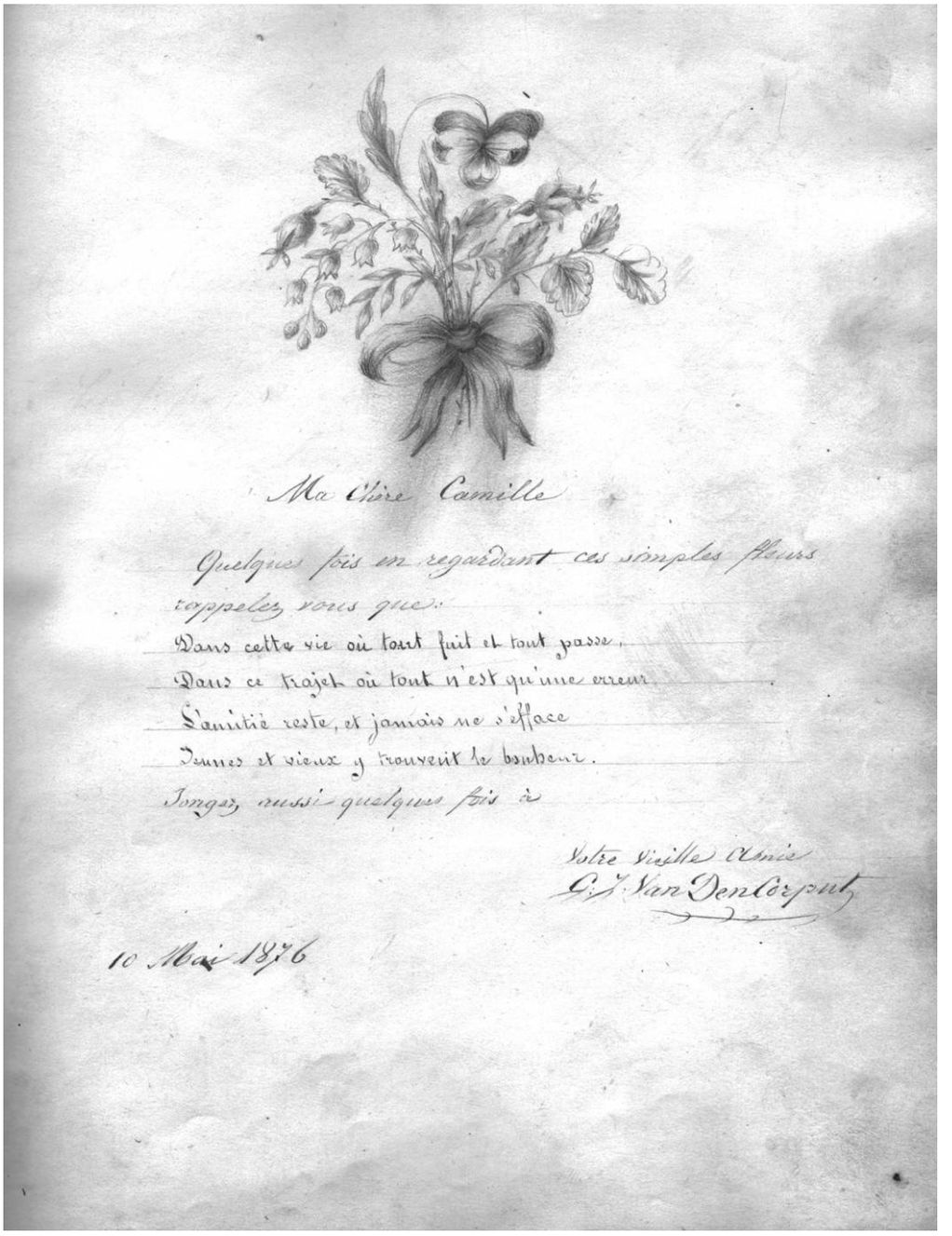


Fig. 27. Page from Camille Block souvenir album, 1875–87, showing entry signed G. J. Van DenCorput, May 10, 1876. Graphite and ink on paper; H. 8⅝″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

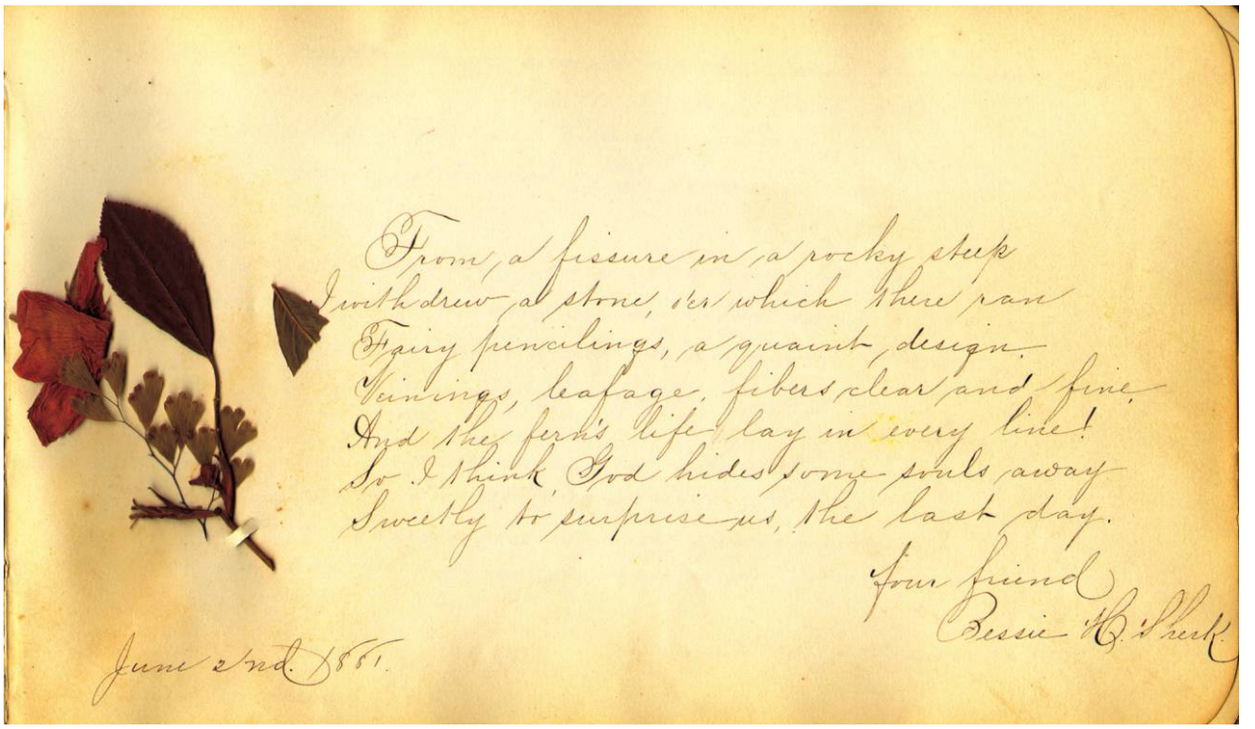


Fig. 28. Page from Lizzie Cadmus album, 1877–82, showing entry for Bessie Sherk, June 2, 1881. Ink and pressed flowers on paper; H. 5⅛″, W. 7⅞″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

icans (free and enslaved) from the boundaries of middle-class gentility.[74] Just as cards could be used to reinforce and strengthen existing social networks between members of the white middle class, they worked to connect producers and consumers through the imagery and conventions of the medium. This communicative relationship could also exclude certain demographics by reinforcing a racialized middle-class identity.

In a small but significant subset of advertising trade cards, printers incorporated visual caricatures of immigrants and African Americans from popular culture to attract attention. About 9 percent of the cards sampled (see the appendix) use common racial tropes to ridicule minority groups from the perspective of white middle-class (Anglo-Saxon Protestant) hegemony.[75] Printers and advertisers copied and reworked popular parodies of courtship and politics and drew from other popular culture references such as Gilbert and Sullivan, using humor as a platform to augment their commercial appeal through images. As theorist Arthur Asa Berger notes, humor functions as a means of social integration by helping individuals relate to each other and identify with each other, thereby establishing group identity and a sense of solidarity. Those who understand and laugh at a particular joke thus become a group of insiders in relation to outsiders, who miss the punch line or who are the butt of the joke itself.[76] Like a joke given at the beginning of a speech, humor in advertising served two goals: it warmed up an intended audience of insiders to the

[74] Recently, scholars studying free blacks in the antebellum north have demonstrated the ways in which African Americans sought to counteract such exclusionary representations by adopting the codes of sentiment and middle-class decorum professed by their white counterparts. See, e.g., Dunbar, *Fragile Freedom*, 120–47; Cobb, "Forget Me Not," 28–46.

[75] In the early to mid-nineteenth century, mainstream middle-class American culture racialized the Irish alongside other minority groups as a separate (and inferior) race from Anglo-Saxon Protestants. In the most common representations, the Irish took on ape-like characteristics not unlike caricatures of African Americans. Such racial divisions continued in the late nineteenth century and expanded to include the immigrants from southern and eastern Europe arriving in the United States, who seemed to threaten the dominant Anglo-Saxon Protestants even more. It was not until the second quarter of the twentieth century that the Irish and these other groups would be folded into the hegemonic category of "white." See Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

[76] Arthur Asa Berger, *Blind Men and Elephants: Perspectives on Humor* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2010), 95–96.

message presented, but more important, it made the message itself more memorable. Advertising images of immigrants and nonwhites used belittling satire to reinforce existing social hierarchies in American culture in the post-Reconstruction years, a period that witnessed the rapid expansion of Jim Crow laws, immigration restrictions, and other exclusionary cultural forces. Creation of such in-groups supported commercial success by appealing to white consumers along racial lines—by bolstering and securing whites' own identities as superior citizens through ridiculing representations of immigrants and African Americans.

The popularity of Gilbert and Sullivan musicals provided frequent fodder for printers aiming to capture a broad public audience.[77] In a card picturing a rotund Buttercup from *H.M.S. Pinafore* (1878; fig. 29), the printer depicts a squat, bowlegged woman, instead of the rosy-cheeked beauty described in the score (fig. 30).[78] The former woman's broad upper lip and red hair mark her as Irish, while her large frame and overweight appearance defeminize her, marginalizing her as anything but dainty and beautiful. The image echoes racial caricatures of brutish Irish women (fig. 31), yet the caption "They call me Buttercup with Magnolia Hams" suggests that the hams could transform her in the eyes of potential suitors. Calling to mind the life-enhancing properties of consumption that would be touted by advertisers several decades later, this card nevertheless parodies such claims to curative metamorphosis by rendering the change unfathomable and absurd in this case.[79] The rotund Buttercup—whose thighs, like the hams she holds, are thick and meaty—is hopeless in her attempt at femininity, and thus the humor in this trade card

Fig. 29. Krebs Lithographing Co., Cincinnati, trade card for Magnolia Hams, "They Call Me Little Buttercup," ca. 1880. Chromolithograph; H. ca. 3″, W. ca. 4″. (ephBTM, Ephemera Collections, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

satirizes ethnic Otherness in order to construct an appeal to presumably non-Irish white insiders.[80]

Immigrant caricatures were common in the 1880s, especially as nativism rose against Irish and other immigrant populations in the Northeast and against Asian immigrant workers in the American West.[81] In another card for Magnolia Hams, a handsome and well-dressed Ulysses S. Grant travels to China, where he is greeted by locals offering their plumpest rats for his lunch. Declining, Grant gestures to his black servant wielding a large cured ham on his shoulder (fig. 32). Although the advertiser may have intended the card to emphasize the suitability of his product for long-term travel, depicting rats as haute cuisine—an idea meant to disgust middle-class readers—satirizes non-Western diets. Whether or not these men actually ate rats, the American perception that they did reinforced the immigrants' subordination in domestic popular culture while raising up the value of the American product, Magnolia Hams. The racial hierarchy cre-

[77] Printers appropriated both the characters and the dialogue from popular Gilbert and Sullivan works such as *H.M.S. Pinafore* (1878), *Patience* (1881), and *The Mikado* (1885). These popular operettas were easily serialized in trade cards and promised to bring steady profits as individuals collected the cards one by one to include in their scrapbooks. See, e.g., no. 5, col. 669, ca. 1883, p. 37, DCWL. Bella Clara Landauer also provides a brief discussion of the preponderance of Gilbert and Sullivan themes on trade cards, in *Gilbert and Sullivan's Influence on American Trade Cards* (New York, 1936).

[78] Trade card for Magnolia Hams featuring character from *Pinafore*, ca. 1880, bk 2, p. 22, box F-9, BTC HL; trade card for Higgin's German Laundry Soap, 1880, bk 27, col. 669, DCWL; Sir Arthur Sullivan and William S. Gilbert, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, vocal score, ed. Ephraim Hammett Jones and Carl Simpson (1878; repr., London: Courier Dover, 2002), 16.

[79] Roland Marchand discusses at length the transformative properties of consumption as constructed by advertisers in the 1920s in *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

[80] Here, I use the term "Other" to refer to a subject of difference that is almost the same and that draws mimicry. Theoretical discussions on this point have been made widely by scholars of postcolonial and subaltern studies, as well as critical race theory. A well-known and oft-cited example is bell hooks's chapter, "Eating the Other," in *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Boston: South End, 1992), 21–40.

[81] Like *Pinafore*, the popularity of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* (1885) contributed to an avalanche of cards borrowing Japanese themes and characters from the play: "three little maids" became a common appropriation, appearing in trade cards to sell corsets, thread, watches, elixirs, and other household products. See esp. col. 108, DCWL. On nativism in California, see Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

Fig. 30. Trade card for Higgin's German Laundry Soap, "Come buy of your Buttercup/Dear little Buttercup," ca. 1880. Chromolithograph; H. ca. 3″, W. ca. 4″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

ated between the white Grant and nonwhite Chinese is replicated, in visual and satirical form, by the hierarchy created between (disgusting) Chinese food and (superior) American food. Moreover, the disgust provoked by the cartoon would further reinforce imperial arguments for American commercial and social involvement in China in the last decades of the nineteenth century.[82]

As the servant in this card suggests, African Americans also held a prominent place in the body of caricatured trade cards circulating throughout the United States in the post-Reconstruction years.[83] These images emerged out of white anxieties over the social position of blacks in post-emancipation society and a corresponding desire to discipline African Americans into prewar roles. Such anxieties precipitated a host of critiques about African American life, dress, behavior, and suitability for inclusion in mainstream (white) society, manifest through parodies dismissing African Americans' attempts at achieving middle-class status.[84] In advertising, servile and demeaning images of African Americans became popular as visions of a romanticized antebellum past emerged under the ideology of the Lost Cause after 1870. Such servile images, which included advertising icons such as Aunt Jemima, helped to alleviate white anxieties over the new position of ex-slaves as wage laborers and citizens in US society.[85]

In the varnish trades especially, caricatures that satirized black behavior, language, and dress were commonplace in the 1880s. Between 1880 and 1888, New York varnish manufacturer Clarence

[82] Tompkins argues that disgust, particularly when aimed at nonwhites, was a key component in late nineteenth-century advertising on trade cards. In trade cards that depicted Chinese immigrants, food became "the tool of imperial conquest" (*Racial Indigestion*, 168). Advertising was a common platform for communicating ideas about empire, as Ann McClintock has shown in *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 130–43.

[83] One popular trope depicted blacks using soaps, cleansers, shoe and stove polishes, and the like in a frank linkage between their skin color and the application (or removal) of blackening. The "Gold Dust" twins, the trade characters used to advertise N. K. Fairbank's soaps and cleansers in the 1880s and 1890s, are a typical example (see Warshaw, Series I Soaps, AC NMAH). On other representations of blacks in advertising, see Marilyn Kern-Foxworth, *Aunt Jemima, Uncle Ben, and Rastus: Blacks in Advertising Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1994); Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), chap. 13; Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion*, 145–82. Other prominent examples in this genre include trade cards for Rising Sun Stove Polish, ca. 1890, box 6, col. 9, DCWL; Miller, Wagner and Lindenstock, trade cards for Marsh's Fine Soaps, ca. 1880, box 4, dr. 4, cab. 8, col. 838, DCWL; Wemple and Co., trade cards for St. Louis Beef Canning Co., ca. 1890, box 2, col. 9, DCWL.

[84] These postbellum caricatures are not unlike those of the antebellum artist Edward William Clay, whose *Life in Philadelphia* series (1828) has been broadly discussed by a range of scholars examining black citizenship in the antebellum period. See, e.g., Emma Jones Lapsansky, "'Since They Got Those Separate Churches': Afro-Americans and Racism in Jacksonian Philadelphia," *American Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (1980): 54–78; Elise Lemire, *"Miscegenation": Making Race in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Cobb, *Picture Freedom*. I am grateful to Diana Williams for introducing me to the work of E. W. Clay. Clay's drawings are closely tied to the antebellum tradition of blackface minstrelsy, which Joshua Brown dates to 1831 in his visual essay, "True Likenesses," in *Forever Free: The Story of Emancipation and Reconstruction*, ed. Eric Foner (New York: Knopf, 2005), 37. See also Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion*, 157.

[85] Jo-Ann Morgan, "Mammy and the Huckster: Selling the Old South for the New Century," *American Art* 9, no. 1 (1995): 86–109; Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (1988; repr., New York: Perennial Classics, 2002), image captions facing p. 387. On the Lost Cause in American history, see David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2001), esp. 255–99.

Fig. 31. Florence Nightingale and Bridget McBruiser, 1866. From Samuel R. Wells, *New Physiognomy; or, Signs of Character as Manifested through Temperament and External Forms, and Especially in "The Human Face Divine"* (1866; repr., New York: Wells, 1875), 537. (Printed Book and Periodical Collection, Winterthur Library.)

Brooks and Co. used over thirty different trade card designs—each of which depicted African Americans in satirical and caricatured portrayals—to advertise his products.[86] In the "Darktown Fire Brigade" (fig. 33), for example, a team of bumbling volunteer firemen scramble to hold a ladder against a burning building, while a young woman clings precariously to the ladder's top and a frightened cat leaps from a window. The figures' caricatured features familiarly accentuate swollen lips, frizzy hair, and muscular physiques, conforming to an iconographic program designed to ridicule the group as ugly, unprepared, and perhaps even dangerous in their failure to stop the flames from engulfing the building. At the center of the image, one fireman threatens to impale the young woman with a fire hook as she slips from the ladder. The potentially gruesome sight is partially obscured by a rubber stamp indicating the local agent for Brooks, "E. R. Strong, Hardware, Fort Atkinson, Wis."[87] The humor in this scene results from this potential for violence caused by the men's ineptitude. Witnessing such ineptitude creates a privileged and safe position for white spectators of the scene, which in turn reinforces white racial superiority by mocking the clumsiness of the black subjects depicted therein.

As they did in the antebellum period, caricatured images such as this marked the inferiority of blacks and reinforced the solidarity of whites by pointing out blacks' supposedly ill-fated attempts at performing white middle-class norms.[88] Such images

[86] Brooks's cards circulated widely, reaching Fort Atkinson, WI, in addition to towns along the eastern seaboard and in the Midwest. Cards for Clarence Brooks varnish, BTC HL. One particularly popular series used by Brooks was the "Blackville" series, published in *Harper's Weekly* from 1874 to 1880 and later reproduced as trade cards and calendar images by the American Bank Note Co. See Michael D. Harris, "Memories and Memorabilia, Art and Identity," *Third Text* 12, no. 44 (1998): 28; Francis Martin, "To Ignore Is to Deny: E. W. Kemble's Racial Caricature as Popular Art," *Journal of Popular Culture* 40, no. 4 (2007): 662. Cards in the collections of BTC HL.

[87] "Darktown Fire Brigade, Hook and Ladder Practice," trade card for Clarence Brooks Varnish, designed by Thomas Worth and published by Currier and Ives, BTC HL. Currier and Ives issued the prints from the mid-1870s to the early 1890s in various sizes, including trade cards, with many large prints sold for framing and household decoration. Each installment in the series sold in the tens of thousands—a sales record for the time. See Joshua Brown, "Countersigns," in Foner, *Forever Free*, 182; Brian F. Le Beau, "African Americans in Currier and Ives's America: The Darktown Series," *Journal of American and Comparative Cultures* 23, no. 1 (2000): 74.

[88] In the mid-seventeenth century, Thomas Hobbes argued for a "superiority theory" of humor, which, once elaborated by Henri Bergson in the nineteenth century, held that laughter can often be a "social gesture of mockery" extending from the realization of one's superiority over another person and resulting in a supposition of power over the ridiculed subject. See John Morreall, ed., *The Philosophy of Humor and Laughter* (New York: SUNY Press, 1987), 19, 117, citing Thomas Hobbes, *The Elements*

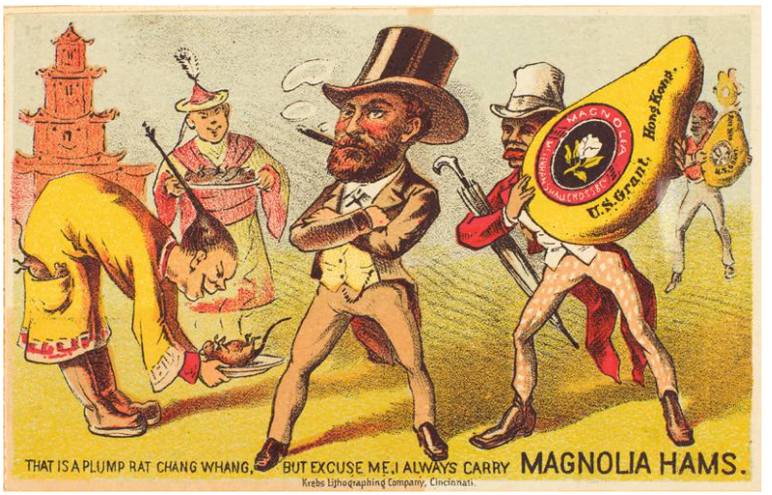


Fig. 32. Krebs Lithographing Co., Cincinnati, trade card for Magnolia Hams, "That Is a Plump Rat Chang Whang," ca. 1878. Chromolithograph; H. ca. 3″, W. ca. 4″. (ephBTM, Ephemera Collections, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

served as a social corrective, policing behaviors deemed improper or uncouth by the dominant members of the white middle class while alleviating white anxieties about the potential for African American political power in the years after emancipation.[89] Like other cards that used familiar iconographies to augment their commercial appeal, these caricatures used humor to appeal to potential customers who were white. Marginalizing behavior that deviated from middle-class standards of decorum and propriety, the images helped to solidify the identities of white middle-class viewers precisely at the same moment that racial categories replaced class as a primary determinant of one's fitness for citizenship.[90]

In advertising, belittling representations of African Americans disqualified them from participation in the middle class both as genteel individuals and as consumers. Excluding blacks from their vision of an ideal audience, manufacturers implicitly denied blacks the opportunity to participate in the kind of middle-class consumption undertaken by white viewers of these cards.[91] For the ads to be effective, an assumption about the reader's insider identity was necessary—that is, advertisers assumed that much of their audience would be white and that that white audience would have a desire to bolster their own superior identities by ridiculing racial Others. Humor worked to solidify rising racial divisions in the years immediately after the Civil War, when the promise of emancipation seemed to threaten existing racial hierarchies. Thus, trade cards that caricatured immigrants and blacks became a form of racial currency that reinforced in-group mentalities (such as white supremacy) through ridicule and humor. Just as trade cards helped develop and maintain the social networks of the white

of Law, Natural and Politic (London, 1650–51), chap. 9, pt. 13, http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/Hob2Ele.html. Lapsansky ("Since They Got Those Separate Churches") and Lemire (*Miscegenation*) highlight the ways in which visual caricatures excluded African Americans from citizenry in the antebellum years.

[89] Morreall, *Philosophy of Humor*, 188; Joseph Boskin, "The Complicity of Humor: The Life and Death of Sambo," in ibid., 254–59. As social correctives, these images thus worked in much the same way as Michel Foucault's theory of normative sexual behaviors in the Victorian period; see *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, *An Introduction* (1978; repr., New York: Vintage, 1990). Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion*, argues that caricatures of blacks provoked desire and disgust among white audiences, particularly because of anxieties over political power, which was increasingly defined in terms of consumption. Interestingly, Tompkins suggests that caricatured cards showing blacks eating open up a framework whereby blacks might actually be given political agency (vis-à-vis consumption), however uncomfortably (166, 172).

[90] Berger, *Blind Men and Elephants*, 95; Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 68–75. Dawn Schmitz reinforces this point, arguing that the emergent consumer regime linked consumption with whiteness in the decades after the Civil War. See "The Humble Handmaid of Commerce: Chromolithographic Advertising and the Development of Consumer Culture, 1876–1900" (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2004), v.

[91] African Americans sought to rectify such exclusions with consumer products made especially for black audiences in the early twentieth century. See Michelle Mitchell, *Righteous Propagation: African Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny after Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), chap. 6. For the mid-twentieth century, see Kern-Foxworth, *Aunt Jemima*, chap. 5. However, Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion*, 172, 178, asserts that black audiences may have been targeted as early as the 1870s.

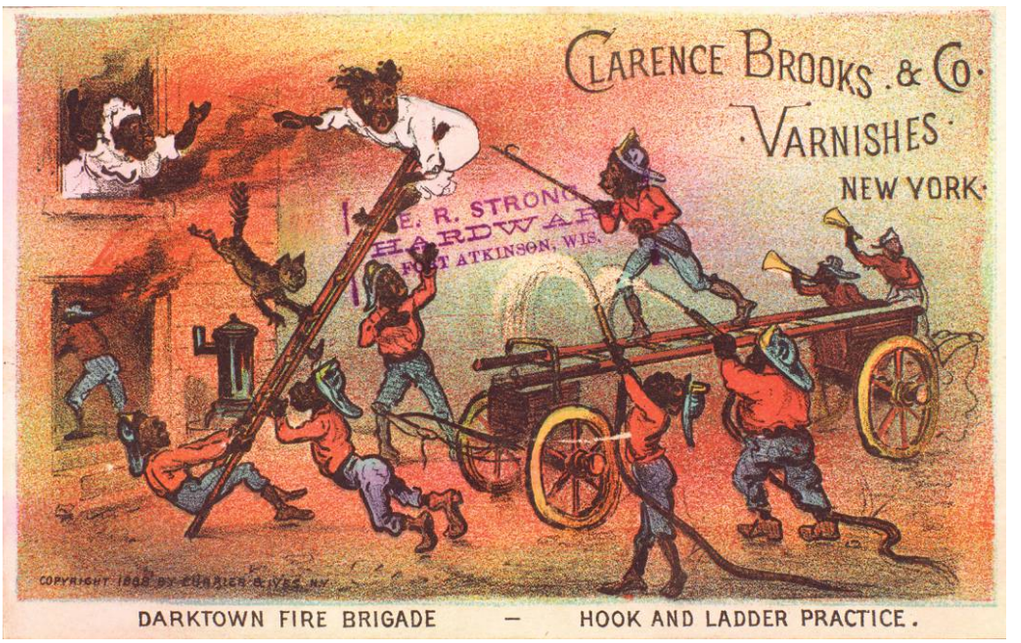


Fig. 33. Thomas Dallow, "Darktown Fire Brigade—Hook and Ladder Practice," 1888. Currier and Ives, New York, trade card for Clarence Brooks and Co. Varnishes, New York. Chromolithograph with ink-stamp addition; H. ca. 3″, W. ca. 5″. (ephBTM, Ephemera Collections, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

middle class by allowing them to display and perform sentiment, these cards reinforced the exclusivity of consumerism through icons of white superiority and racial caricature.[92] Iconographically, racial caricatures worked alongside clasped hands, flowers, and children to appeal to the white middle class in terms they would recognize. In fact, the images became so popular that the collection of trade cards reached fever pitch by 1890.

The Craze for Pictures

Investing a great deal of effort into designing a successful visual appeal for the trade cards they produced, lithographers thus likely understood that trade cards primarily appealed to the public because of the meaningful and entertaining pictures they contained.[93] As Bufford's lithographic firm noted of pictorial advertising in 1885, "A handsome picture will be kept, talked over, asked for, and bring customers."[94] This firm recognized the fact that the masses adored chromolithographs and that trade cards would be collected and saved by scrapbookkeepers. Lithographers thus capitalized on the chromo craze by suggesting local and national merchants do the same—transform this fad for collecting chromo cards into a fad for collecting advertisements, increasing publicity for the product in the process.[95]

By the early 1880s—less than ten years after the introduction of chromolithographed trade cards—writers in the *New York Times* and trade journals were already commenting on the "card mania" that had overtaken the American public.[96] The fad for

[92] In response to such derisive imagery, African Americans displayed their middle-class status through sentimental objects in an effort to bolster arguments for their inclusion in the American citizenry. See Cobb, *Picture Freedom*.

[93] Smith, "Consuming Passions," 66; Dallow, "Treasures of the Mind," 25. Strasser also addresses (albeit briefly) the entertainment function of advertisements as part of the new mass culture of consumption in department stores and urban space, particularly in conjunction with magazine culture and giveaway contests. See *Satisfaction Guaranteed*, 164–65; Garvey, "Scrapbook, Wish Book, Prayer Book," 108–9.

[94] Trade card for Bufford's Boston, 1885, Warshaw, Series I Advertising Industry, AC NMAH; see also "Quaint Devices in Trade: The Extensive Growth of Picture-Card Advertising," *New York Times*, June 18, 1882, 9.

[95] On the chromo craze see Last, *Color Explosion*; Kalba, *Color*.

[96] "High Art on Card-Board," *New York Times*, December 3, 1882, 4; "Quaint Devices in Trade," 9; "The Power of Art on Paper," *Paper World* 5, no. 4 (October 1882): 12.

collecting chromolithographed cards attracted children, businessmen, young women, and the elderly of all classes and races in the United States and reached from places as remote as the Adirondacks to the bustling avenues of Chicago and the growing urban community in San Francisco.[97] Late in her life, Emma Osgood Carnes spent entire days scouring New York City for scrap pictures to include in her albums. Diary entries between 1882 and 1885 record her excitement at finding interesting pictures and her deep disappointment when her searching turned up nothing: "Went out to hunt for scrap pictures. Can't find many."[98] Carnes's dismay points to the coveted nature of these cards but also their seemingly short supply. Hunted and consumed in large quantities, chromo cards promised individuals like Carnes a ticket to experience and identity. As objects that symbolized class, sentiment, and race, trade cards were a hot commodity. Newsworthy collections regularly appeared in the pages of trade journals, including one piece highlighting a woman's collection of over 50,000 cards—itself a voluminous display of her investment in consumer culture. As if to reinforce Bufford's point, authors repeatedly suggested that it was the charming pictures on these interesting little cards that made them attractive to individuals everywhere.[99] But, like Carnes, many collectors would ultimately use the cards to decorate the pages of their albums.

Consuming Ads in Albums

Several important qualities about albums mirror the place of exchange cards in the nineteenth-century United States. As objects with multiple forms, functions, and meanings, albums defy categorization: they were repositories of knowledge, friendship, values, and experiences. Individuals used them to document, play, communicate, experiment, and practice skills at various points in their lives—not just in childhood. Above all, albums were meaningful: if something was important, it went in one's album—for whatever reason—but it was saved nevertheless. As a related component of the nineteenth-century material culture of sentimental exchange, albums demonstrate how trade cards were consumed: collected, exchanged, gifted, manipulated, clipped, pasted, and saved. As scholars have shown, the arrangements on the page are significant tools for understanding American culture—but not only because they demonstrate attitudes toward consumerism, reading, fantasy, or historical events. The arrangements are important because they demonstrate what people thought about advertising—specifically, about trade cards—but even more concretely, how people incorporated advertising objects into their lives. Borrowing the tropes of middle-class sentiment and domesticity, and repackaging those tropes for consumption by the same middle class, trade cards—as advertisements—made consumerism compatible with sentiment, commodifying it to sell commercial products. Through trade cards, advertising integrated itself into an existing culture of exchange in ways that fundamentally transformed consumers' relation to the market.

The practice of album keeping had a long and varied history in the United States, with several overlapping traditions converging in the 1870s when chromolithographed trade cards entered the scene. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, elites and aspiring elites frequently kept albums of collected material (referred to today as commonplace books), which included engravings and clippings from the popular press, handwritten inscriptions, drawings, collected quotes, and other pieces of printed ephemera.[100] These, like the autograph book—a collection of signatures, drawings, remembrances, and material objects (such as pressed flowers)—remained popular through 1900.[101] By the mid-nineteenth century, collectors began including material objects and chromolithographs in their albums, which they sometimes called "scrap-books."[102]

[97] "The Great Scrap-Book Maker," *Paper World* 4, no. 4 (April 1882): 21; "Queen Victoria's Scrap-Books," *Paper World* 32, no. 5 (May 1896): 185.

[98] Emma Osgood Carnes (d. 1886), diary entry for February 14, 1882, cited in Smith, "Consuming Passions," 66; and in Dallow, "Treasures of the Mind," 19 (original in the collections of the Olana State Historic Site, Hudson, NY).

[99] "The Advertising Card Business," *Paper World* 10, no. 4 (May 1885): 4–5; "Power of Art on Paper," 12–15.

[100] James Granger's development of the extra-illustrated (or "Grangerized") book in the eighteenth century is another related practice. See Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, *Scrapbook*, 7; Helfand, *Scrapbooks*, xix.

[101] In early modern Europe, elites and aristocrats collected names and signatures in albums frequently referred to as *album amicorum*, or "friendship albums." Some owners of albums collected signatures as well as illustrations of the places they visited, costumes, and other ephemera. See Margaret Nickson, *Early Autograph Albums in the British Museum* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1970), 13; Rosenthal, "Fashions of Friendship"; Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, *Scrapbook*, 6–7.

[102] The term "scrap-book" derives from the practice from the late 1830s through the end of the nineteenth century of collecting printed scraps and compiling them in an album. See Tucker, Ott,

In 1878 *Godey's Lady's Book* instructed readers of the educational value in creating scrapbooks, while writers in the 1880s such as Mary Blake encouraged mothers to teach their children to practice album making daily.[103] Blake situated the scrapbook as a central component of middle-class life, as an important resource for aesthetic education and amusement. She suggested that the scrapbook socialized the child to understand which pictures were tasteful and how to properly organize them and considered scrapbookmaking an appropriate and valuable activity for both boys and girls.[104] In Blake's formulation, the pasting of commercially produced advertising trade cards into albums and scrapbooks repurposed the handheld chromos as personal exchange cards not unlike those already familiar to nineteenth-century adults who had exchanged sentiment, calling, and greeting cards in their youth. She linked albums and chromo cards—both objects holding currency in the cult of sincerity—and pointed to the ways that these commercially produced materials might be made to serve the goals of domestic, middle-class (and thus sentimental) education.

Creating a scrapbook in the second half of the nineteenth century thus fell under the rubric of wholesome activity for the genteel family, and the practice became a popular pastime with the endorsement of public figures and the authors of domesticity handbooks. Articles describing how to create and fill albums appeared in several popular magazines, including *The Youth's Companion* and *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*.[105] In outlining instructions for building useful albums, Mary Blake encouraged the intermingling of commerce and sentiment:

> For pictures use odd magazines, old papers, publishers' catalogues, advertising circulars, old books whose bindings are hopelessly broken, and the like. … There are so many good and cheap pictures everywhere. … I know of no amusement to which children will return with greater delight, and out of which they will get so much pleasure for the same expenditure of time and money. … In such a book you can [also] put all these bright little reward and Christmas and Easter cards, pictures and valentines. … [They] will last a whole generation of children and be a never-failing delight.[106]

Aggregating trade cards, advertising almanacs, newspaper scraps, and other commercial ephemera together with objects of sentiment—such as reward of merit cards and greeting cards—Blake equalized the value of these objects for scrapbook use. She suggested that images, even those intended for commercial purposes, could be transformed into highly meaningful, personally expressive icons through their use in scrapbooks. Her willingness to adapt an inherently commercial medium (trade cards) into personal and domestic life (album making) demonstrates the blurred and perhaps indistinguishable boundaries between public and private. Indeed, contrary to typical understandings of the doctrine of separate domestic and commercial spheres, Blake demonstrated that the products of these realms often intermingled in very purposeful—not accidental—ways.[107]

As the practice of creating albums grew more popular after the Civil War, stationers and publishers responded by marketing blank, prebound albums to members of the growing middle class, who filled the pages with collected exchange cards, clippings, scribbled notes, and other items.[108] By

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and Buckler, *Scrapbook*, 7. In most cases, the scrapbook of the late nineteenth century was more often an album for the display of found lithographs and fancy pictures than a memory album of keepsakes, photographs, and printed ephemera. This type of memory album, most akin to the modern scrapbook of twenty-first-century parlance, evolved out of the preservation practices demonstrated within nineteenth-century autograph albums, diaries, and commonplace books. When trade card collecting declined in the early twentieth century, scrapbooking found new life with the growth of the cinema and fan culture in the 1920s and 1930s. See Scheiner, "Deanna Durbin Devotees."

[103] "Scrap-Book," *Godey's Lady's Book* (August 1878); Blake, *Twenty-Six Hours*, 145–48. See also Eliassen, "In the Hands of Children," 199.

[104] Blake, *Twenty-Six Hours*, 145–48. See also Janet Emily (Meugens) Ruutz-Rees, *Home Occupations* (New York: Appleton, 1883), 97, cited in Garvey, *Adman*, 17; Guest, "Victorian Scrapbooks," 13; Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, *Scrapbook*, 9; Norman Brosterman, *Inventing Kindergarten* (New York: Abrams, 1997), 22, 124, cited in Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, *Scrapbook*, 283 n. 30. On scrapbooks created by men see Rusk, "Collecting the Confederacy."

[105] On how to create an album, see "Album Picture," *Godey's Lady's Book* 71 (September 1865): 260; "Album with Raised Paper-Work," *Harper's Bazaar* 2, no. 10 (March 6, 1869): 148; "Lace Albums," *Art Amateur* (September 1, 1879): 85; "Home-Made Christmas Gifts," *Youth's Companion* 57, no. 51 (December 18, 1884): 509; Harriet E. Banning, "Memory Album," *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* 153, no. 2 (February 1897): 233; Mrs. M. R., "Paper Doll's House," in *Good Housekeeping Discovery Book*, no. 1 (New York: Phelps, 1905), 78–79; Mary Louise, "Making a Scrapbook," *Youth's Companion* 100, no. 14 (April 8, 1926): 280. According to Ellen Gruber Garvey, articles in the *Christian Union* and *New York Evangelist* advocated scrapbookmaking for children, who could then send the books to underprivileged youths in the American South, India, and hospitals. See Mrs. Susan T. Perry, "One Way to Do Good," *New York Evangelist* 51, no. 25 (June 17, 1880): 6; "Another Call," *Christian Union* 35, no. 8 (February 24, 1887): 15, discussed in Garvey, "Scrapbook, Wish Book, Prayer Book," 104–6.

[106] Blake, *Twenty-Six Hours*, 146.

[107] See n. 16.

[108] Guest, "Victorian Scrapbooks," 20; Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, *Scrapbook*, 7–11.

the end of the century, blank albums were available in a wide array of styles and price points, with prices ranging from about 25 cents to $1.50 each (or about 6–20 percent of the average male worker's daily wage for the cheaper albums).[109]

Manipulating Cards in Albums

Such albums typically became the sites for the consumption of trade cards and other colorful printed material in the Gilded Age, where individuals took ownership of the cards in creative ways. Scrapbookkeepers might choose to organize their album pages thematically according to subject (grouping flowers, children, etc.) or printer's/publisher's series, with attention to pattern and symmetry, or linearly (lining up images with no other apparent organizational structure; figs. 34 and 35). They used blank, prebound albums purchased at the stationer's store, old ledgers and account books, and handmade concoctions (figs. 36 and 37). In some cases, such as albums by Robert Ahles and Ada Cocker, users chose a central image (such as a child's face or a horse) from which to build a framework of scraps and other cards to complement it (fig. 38, and see the woman in the oval Greek key frame in fig. 35).[110] Still other scrapbookkeepers grouped cards according to content and form, separating reward of merit from trade, calling, greeting, and religious cards in a single album.[111] In this way, album makers distinguished between different media while also recognizing different iconographies and designs on exchange cards.

Users sometimes clipped and modified the cards in various creative ways when including them in an album. Of the cards sampled for this study, approximately 7 percent had been the victims of liberal pruning and cropping at the hand of the collector (as in fig. 39; see the appendix for additional details).[112] Such evidence of the physical toll of consuming trade cards demonstrates the user's interaction with and reception of this medium. Showing complete disregard for the integrity of the original object, these users also intermingled different media—mixing printed cards with handwritten notes and other ephemera in a variety of configurations that functioned to memorialize relationships and express personal growth and creativity (fig. 40, and see Elsie Abbot's album in fig. 4).[113] For each of these functions, the practice of scrapbooking itself provided a mode of entertainment and personal expression.

The stationery industry moved to support the consumption of trade cards in scrapbooks after 1870, offering the requisite tools and accoutrements for album making at ever-lowering prices. Since the colonial period, retailers and printers had capitalized on the popularity of albums, importing bound, blank albums from Europe. During the 1820s, US bookmakers began creating sturdy, leather-bound albums for use by the urban middle classes.[114] Soon, advertisements touting the availability of an array of albums for purchase regularly appeared in urban newspapers. As the decades progressed, stationers carried a wider range of materials suitable for album making—such as scissors, glues, tissue papers, and die-cut scraps (e.g., those on the page featuring the woman in the oval Greek key frame)—as well as craft materials for fancywork.[115] Mark Twain even joined in the action in 1877, patenting and selling his prepasted album with instructions for creating perfect scrap collages (figs. 41–43).[116]

[109] Dallow, "Treasures of the Mind," 20, citing an 1897 Christmas catalog for F. A. O. Schwarz in Francine Kirsch, *Chromos: A Guide to Paper Collectibles* (San Diego, CA: Barnes, 1981), 57. Median wage statistics for a range of laborers can be found in Clarence D. Long, *Wages and Earnings in the U.S., 1860–1890* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960), 94–108. For the purposes of this article I used the highest day wage paid (to bricklayers and masons, approximately $3.88/day) vs. the lowest wage paid (to unskilled day laborers, about $1.20/day). Both measures are for male occupations; female laborers and children earned considerably less.

[110] Robert Ahles scrapbook, 1883, no. 3, col. 669, and Ada Cocker scrapbook, 1881, doc. 1335, both DCWL. Dallow also examines this type of organization in "Treasures of the Mind," 14.

[111] Burt Carr album, 1883–1924, no. 16, col. 669, DCWL.

[112] Several other historians offer corroborating evidence to suggest that cards provided ready fodder for nimble scissoring: Garvey, *Adman*, 34; and Smith, "Consuming Passions," 68, both citing Lina B. Beard and Adelia B. Beard, *The American Girls' Handy Book: How to Amuse Yourself and Others* (1887; repr., New York: Scribner's, 1898), 395–97. In her examination of women's scrapbooks in North Carolina, Dallow also found evidence that users cropped and manipulated trade cards to privilege the image over surrounding (and now lost) information and text ("Treasures of the Mind," 27). Finally, scholars studying paper-doll scrapbooks (known variously as "paper dollhouses" or by the more generic term "collage albums") have also demonstrated that trade cards were often victim to liberal cropping in scrapbooks. An exemplary study can be found in Gordon, *Saturated World*, 37–62.

[113] Garvey, "Scrapbook, Wish Book, Prayer Book," 110–11; Garvey, *Adman*, 30.

[114] Good, *Founding Friendships*, 154–63.

[115] Advertisement in the *New York Herald*, January 1, 1836, 3. A later example appears in Nancy Rosin, "Our Saving Graces: Archivists of the Past, Present, and Future," *Ephemera Journal* 12 (2008): 43. Blake also enumerates the tools needed for successful album making in *Twenty-Six Hours*, 147. See also n. 67.

[116] Garvey, *Writing with Scissors*, 61.

Fig. 34. Pages from "Art Scraps Book," 1880. Collage; H. 13⅜″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

As noted, the images printed on the face of trade cards proved the most appealing to collectors, who regularly disregarded or destroyed the product information on the cards. Most trade cards carried minimal product information on the front side; these details were relegated to the backside of the card and thus facilitated the scrapbookmaker's privileging of image over text. Many users clipped, trimmed, and cropped trade cards to fit narratives they had created from the found imagery in cards and other chromolithographed ephemera.[117] In paper dollhouses individuals regularly appropriated and cropped found commercial imagery in order to form coherent narratives of domesticity. Figure 44 shows one such book opened to a page showing a parlor scene constructed from wallpaper samples, engravings (likely taken from ladies' magazines, sales catalogs, or pattern books), and chromolithographs of a woman and baby. The oversized baby distorts the scale of the page, having been pasted behind a chair but atop a velvet couch that has been hand-painted red. Although the scrapbookmaker's scissor cuts are fairly meticulous, bits of white space appear peeping around the edges of the furnishings in the room, as if to expose the constructed nature of the page. The original sources of the images thus concealed, we might never know the initial context for the image of the baby, were it not for the appearance of the same baby on a stock card (produced by Major and Knapp around 1880) in another album (see fig. 34).[118] In the collage album, the grouped images form stories and themes, eschewing the intended meaning of the ads for the users' own personal meanings in a form of bricolage that prefigured twentieth-century mod-

[117] Fol. 371, p. 18, and fol. 393, pp. 8–9, both DCWL. In one example from the Harry Page collection of scrapbooks at Manchester Metropolitan University, the individual has written a fictional story using trade card imagery for the characters and props, handwriting the narrative at the bottom of each page. See M. Alexis Easley, "Narrating the Self: Scrapbook as Graphic Novel" (paper presented at the annual conference of the Nineteenth-Century Studies Association, Charleston, SC, February 3, 2017).

[118] Stock card produced by Major and Knapp, New York, as shown in fol. 393, p. 8, DCWL. Note that this card also appears in Mendsen no. 39, p. 85, col. 669, DCWL. See also n. 112.

Fig. 35. Page from Laura Scherffius album, vol. 1, 1890. Collage; H. $14^{9}/_{16}''$. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

ern and postmodern artistic experiments.[119] Using the stock image of the baby to complete the narrative of this page, our anonymous consumer departed from the commercial function of the card in favor of using it for personal narrative purposes.

This practice of appropriating found imagery from chromolithographs into the service of memory making in albums was widespread during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. To illustrate, a survey of 1,000 trade cards in the Huntington Library collections revealed that 100 percent displayed marks of former album use, including adhesive residue on the text side of the card, torn

[119] Higonnet, "Secluded Vision," 32–33; Gordon, *Saturated World*, 61.

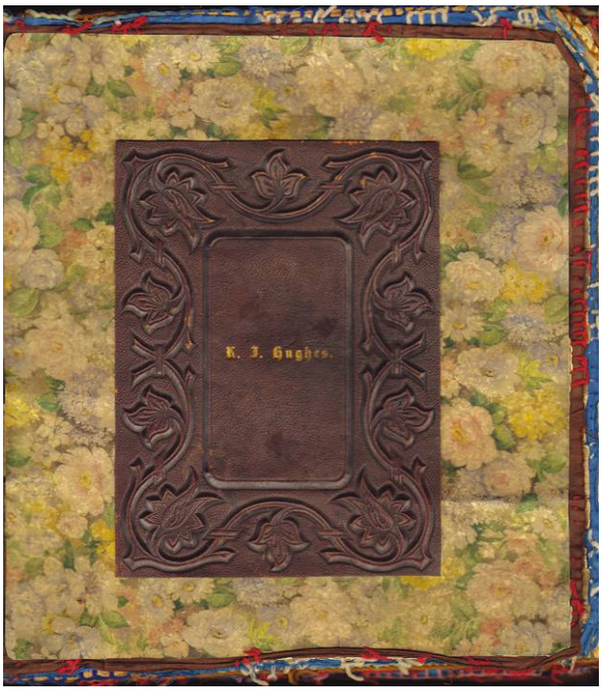


Fig. 36. Cover, K. J. Hughes album, ca. 1876–81, showing reused book cover pasted onto handmade scrapbook. Gilt leather, fabric, and paper; H. 13″, W. 12⅝″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

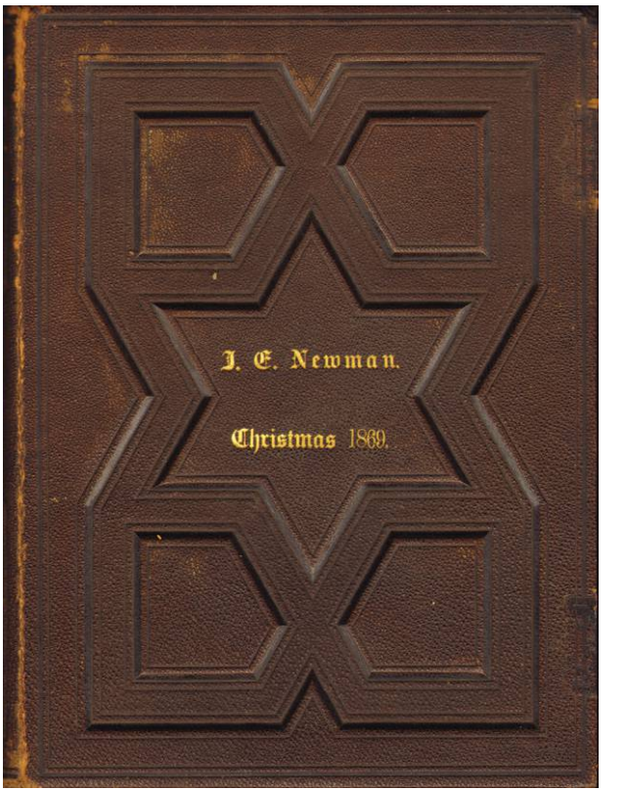


Fig. 37. Cover, J. E. Newman Album, 1869. Gilt leather over wood or cardboard; H. ca. 11¾″, W. ca. 7⅞″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

remnants of paper where the card had been affixed to album pages, and cropped edges showing the user's manipulation (e.g., see torn paper on fig. 16 and collage albums above).[120] For many users, once the commercial function of the trade card-as-advertisement had passed—that is, after the point of sale—the trade card became a collectible object in the service of the individual.[121]

Albums and Memory Making

In addition to their functions as educational, taste-cultivating objects, albums recorded lived experiences for individuals.[122] In the summer of 1876, Elizabeth Wills Vernon of Brooklyn, New York, attended the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. As she traveled throughout the Centennial Exposition, Vernon collected programs, trade cards, and other ephemera from the fair's many exhibitors (fig. 45). She likely jotted down notes of the displays so that she could carefully record them later in her scrapbook, as the book contains evidence of careful planning: Vernon plotted out sections of pages for each area of the fair, noting in pencil at the top of the page the beginning of each section in her book (figs. 46 and 47). Perhaps she carried the book with her on her visit, to gather signatures from friends and acquaintances she met along her route through the pavilions (fig. 48). In any case, she took great care to document the sights, sounds, and faces she witnessed at the exposition that summer: her scrapbook provides a visual record of the fair's many halls, events, and displays. Intermingled with drawings of the Corliss Engine and other technologies is evidence that she visited Prang's booth at the fair (compare her Prang cards with the stock trade cards illustrated in figs. 9 and 10), large en-

[120] It is important to note, however, that many twentieth-century collectors left their own marks on Victorian albums by removing, replacing, adding, and otherwise manipulating the cards contained within, as one album in col. 669, DCWL, demonstrates (the album contains a note from the collector, Ms. Thelma Mendsen, confessing to such manipulation). For aggregate data from the sample surveyed for this study, see the appendix.

[121] Black, "Corporate Calling Cards," 296. Dallow also notes the transient use value of such objects in "Treasures of the Mind," 25, citing Michael Thompson, *Rubbish Theory: The Creation and Destruction of Value* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

[122] Buckler and Leeper, "Antebellum Woman's Scrapbook," 2.

Fig. 38. Pages from Robert Ahles scrapbook, 1883. Collage; H. ca. 12⅝″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

gravings clipped from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, signatures of family members and dignitaries—including famed American poet Henry W. Longfellow—and hand-colored fashion plates.[123] In this way Vernon's scrapbook worked much like a diary or journal would for other members of the middle class in the nineteenth century, but instead of compiling her thoughts in written phrases and expressions, Vernon visualized her memories in chromolithographs and other drawings. On the title page, she constructed her initials, "EWV," out of die-cut scraps and decorated the page with flowers and birds (fig. 49). In so doing, she created a chromolithographed signature that concretized her attachment to the album as a record of her experiences at the fair. In this way, albums facilitated the use of trade cards as a form of emotional currency that memorialized experience in visual form.

Containing carefully selected colorful materials, scrapbooks thus became treasured keepsakes that preserved memories for many individuals. Burt Carr's album contains materials dating roughly from 1880 to 1924, suggesting that Carr considered his album to be an important keeper of memorable objects over a nearly forty-year span. The objects in his album—which include religious and commercial chromolithographed cards, clipped scraps, pressed flowers, and other printed materials—provide a loose chronological narrative of Carr's life: at each interval the material objects become signifiers for his interests and experiences. On one page, he created a memorial to a murdered teenager, Josie Langmaid, who was brutally killed while walking to school in Pembroke, New Hampshire, in October 1875. Carr's album page features a poem "in memory" of Josie, marketed for sale by George G. Wilkins, a bookseller in Pittsfield, NH (fig. 50).[124] Carr has placed a chromolithograph of a young woman alongside the poem, which is encircled by pressed

[123] Vernon, "Centennial Scrapbook," Last HL. Jolly, in examining a woman's scrapbook of the 1893 Columbian Exposition, suggests that the album provided a venue for an individual to create a personal narrative of the fair and, in turn, of national history, while registering the intersection of private and public experience as the compiler began processing and exploring a new global awareness. See "History in the Making," 79–96.

[124] Burt Carr album, 1883–1924, no. 16, col. 669, DCWL. See also Eliassen, "In the Hands of Children," 204.

Fig. 39. Page from scrapbook, ca. 1876. Collage; H. ca. 11″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

flowers much like a grave would be surrounded with floral wreaths. The event had gained national attention when Langmaid's body was found and again in 1878 when her killer, Joseph La Page, was executed.[125] Carr's scrapbook memorial to the grisly death of the seventeen-year-old Josie suggests that the event punctuated his own life and moved him to want to remember her for decades to come. Carr's own voice is largely absent from these pages—nowhere in the book does he annotate the objects he has included—so historians are left to speculate on the meaning of Josie's murder for him.

While Carr's voice is silent in his album, other scrapbookmakers can be heard loud and clear:

[125] "The Langmaid Tragedy: A Conclusive Show of Evidence against La Page; His Conviction Almost Certain," *New York Times*, November 2, 1875, 10.

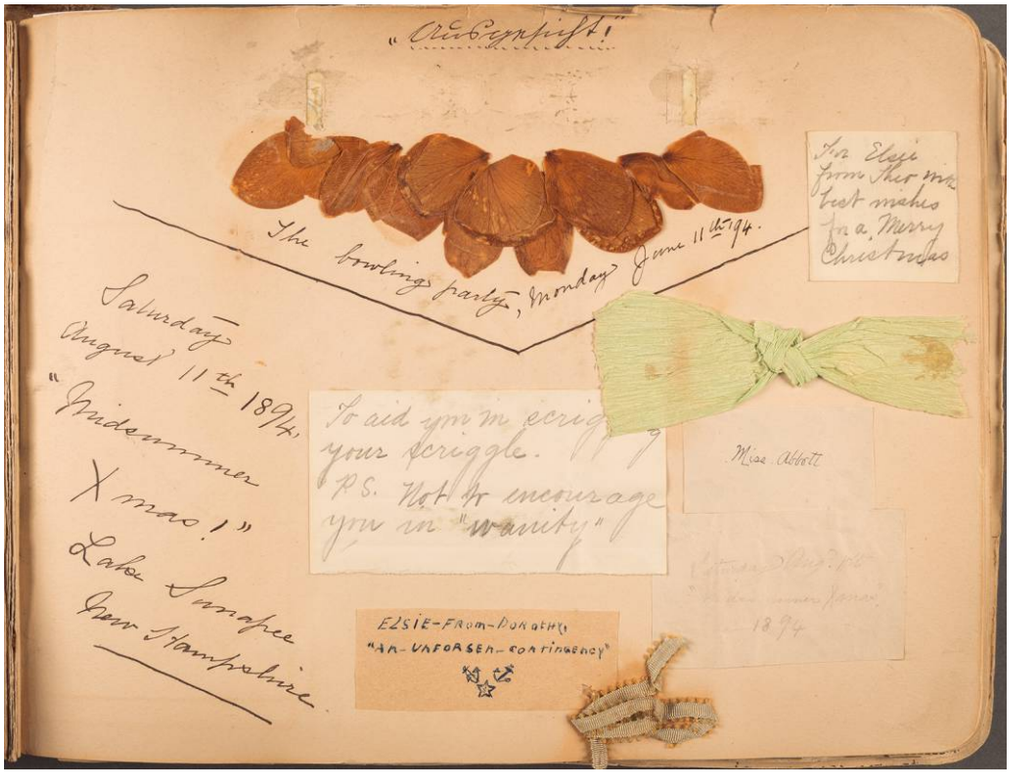


Fig. 40. Page from Elsie Sargeant Abbot scrapbook, 1893–99. Mixed media on paper; H. 9″, W. 11″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

throughout her album, Elsie Abbot jotted diary-like commentary among the objects pasted on each page to narrate the memories preserved with cards, programs, and letters. When collecting trade cards from the Columbian Exposition in 1893, she commented that the display for Van Houten's Cocoa was "very attractive." On the opposite page, Abbot pasted programs from a concert and theatrical presentation she attended and scribbled her reactions to the "perfectly splendid!" performance in the margins (see fig. 4).[126] In this way, scrapbooks helped record the variety of daily life as individuals moved between private and public spheres. Commercial trade cards mix with photographs, pressed flowers, printed ephemera, and commentary on the pages of Abbot's album, documenting her lived experiences as a young woman at the end of the nineteenth century. For Abbot, the advertisers' cards she collected from the fair became material signifiers that memorialized her interaction with the world of commerce, just as pressed flowers and letters concretized her private relationships with family and friends (see fig. 40). She curated her album to blend these spheres in imitation of her own daily lived experiences. Her album thus reflects the messiness of life, a messiness that defied the separation of public and private as proposed by etiquette guidebooks.[127] Moreover, the album itself embodies the tension between these two idealized worlds: as a commercially produced, marketed product intended for the collection and consumption of both sentimental and commercial materials, the album facilitated the projection of material desires onto sentimental objects and the projection of sentimental emotions onto commercial goods. When retail merchants advertised cards, scraps, and other items for album making, they integrated sentimental culture into the commercial market. Album making thus became an activity that allowed individuals to express market desires under the guise of sentimental escapism.

Just as exchange cards helped memorialize relationships between friends and family members, albums held a special place in the hearts of many

[126] Elsie Sargeant Abbot scrapbook, 1893–99, doc. 156, DCWL. This album is also examined by Guest in "Victorian Scrapbooks," 27.

[127] See n. 16.

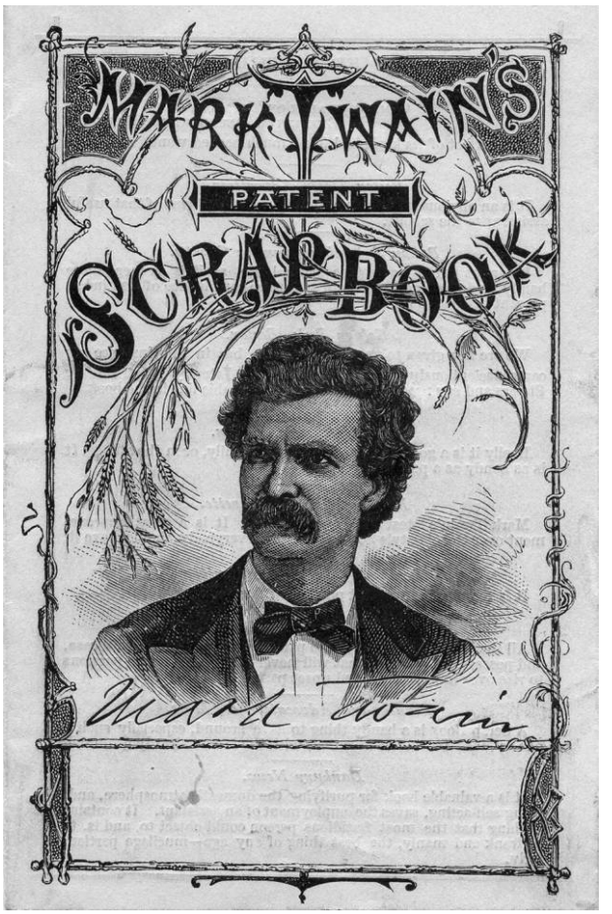


Fig. 41. Cover, pamphlet advertising Mark Twain's Patent Scrapbook, 1877. Newsprint; H. ca. 4″, W. ca. 2½″ folded, ca. 12″ open. (John and Carolyn Grossman Collection, Winterthur Library.)

middle-class Americans. In the middle-class household, albums often became showpieces for visitors who entered the parlor—as objects that, like other parlor furnishings, demonstrated the owner's taste and gentility. By referencing both emotional values and past consumption, album arrangements and the volumes of colorful cards inside provided decorative accoutrements that aided the performance of middle-class status in the parlor.[128] Ada Cocker received her album as a present from her father on her tenth birthday and clearly saw the book as a reflection of her personality: she chose a picture of a lovely lady to flank the inscription page, mimicking the common practice of including a portrait frontispiece in a biography (fig. 51).[129] Other young men and women described their attachment to their albums with language that doted on the prized nature of these emotive objects. In her letters home during the Civil War, volunteer nurse Cornelia Hancock wrote to various family members over a three-month period, describing how much she grieved over an album she had lost during travel from one encampment to another. Hancock's words place the album in her highest regard, and she noted that the loss of the object occupied her thoughts frequently.[130]

Moreover, several scrapbookkeepers treasured their albums so much that they gifted them to friends and family members upon completion, special occasions, and death. Like Ada Cocker's father, individuals often presented new and completed scrapbooks as gifts that concretized relationships. For example, Laura Scherffius of Evansville, Indiana, filled and presented an album as a Christmas present to her younger sister Norma when Laura was about nine years old. Filled with die-cut scraps, the album must have been a treasure for the young Norma.[131] Likewise, Mrs. W. F. Tracy gave her album, completed around 1890, to Phyllis Hargne in 1929. It is unclear what relationship Mrs. Tracy had to Phyllis, but it is likely that the latter had admired the book and received it as a present from Mrs. Tracy on some worthy occasion.[132] As objects, these albums both reference and materialize codified symbols of sentiment and gentility, including the tokens that were exchanged on holidays and other special occasions. Saved by subsequent generations, such albums survive in both large and small archival collections across the United States. For these individuals, the scraps contained in their albums—the chromolithographed bits of paper, engravings, newspaper clippings, exchange cards, and other tokens they saved—assisted their goals in expressing friend-

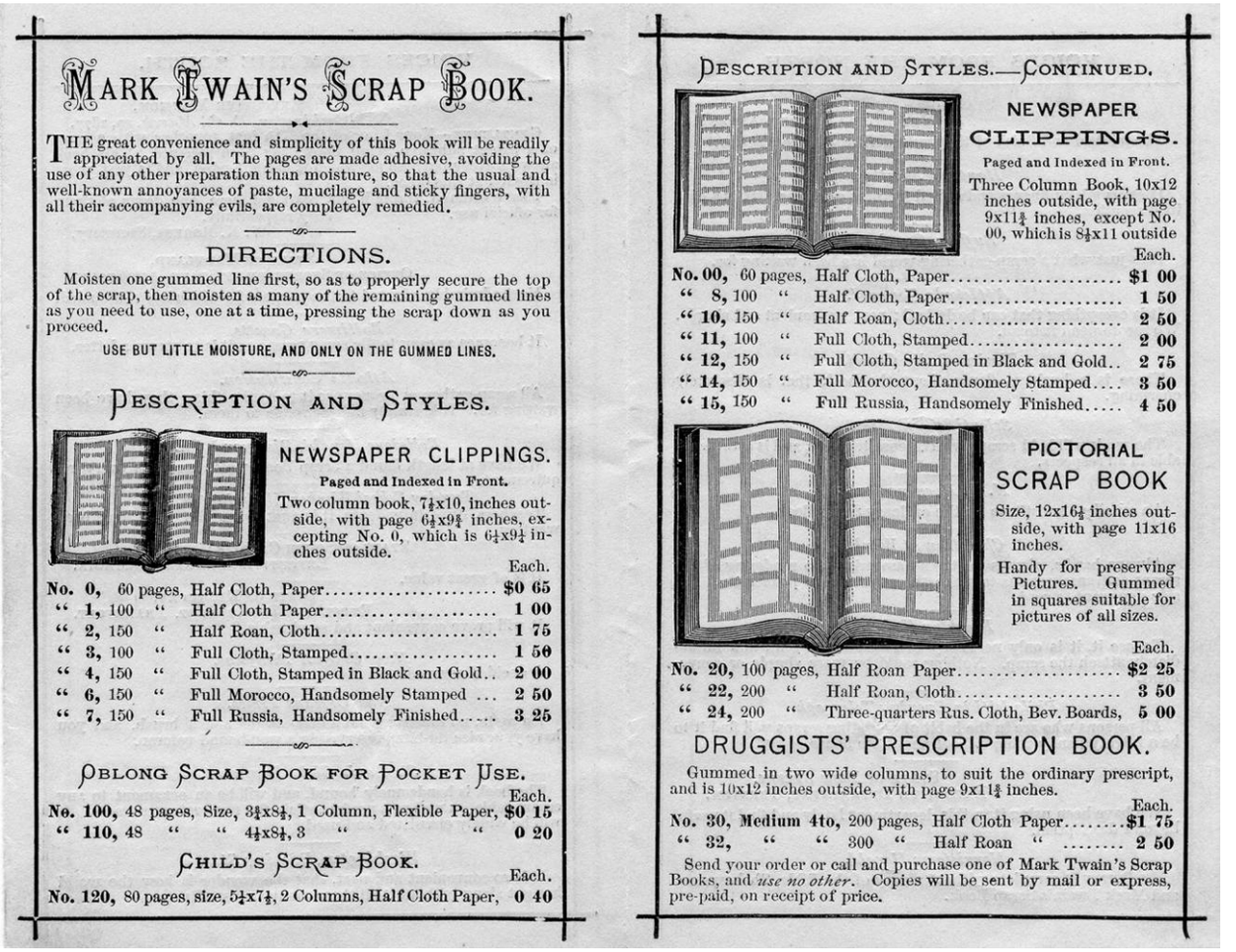
[128] "The Family Album," *Youth's Companion* 58, no. 42 (October 15, 1885): 406; "May's Scrapbook," *Christian Advocate* 68, no. 48 (November 30, 1893): 774. See also Elizabeth E. Siegel, "'Miss Domestic' and 'Miss Enterprise'; or, How to Keep a Photograph Album," in Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, *Scrapbook*, 253; Smith, "Consuming Passions," 67, 75; Cobb, "Forget Me Not."

[129] Ada Cocker scrapbook, 1881, doc. 1335, DCWL. Eliassen, "In the Hands of Children," 201, notes that children frequently received albums as presents.

[130] Cornelia Oatis Hancock to her mother and sister, May 31, 1864, June 15, 1864, and July 14, 1864, in *Letters of a Civil War Nurse: Cornelia Hancock, 1863–1865*, ed. Henrietta Stratton Jaquette (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 97, 105, and 127, respectively.

[131] Laura Scherffius scrapbook, ca. 1890–94, col. 120, DCWL.

[132] Mrs. W. F. Tracy scrapbook, ca. 1890, no. 32, col. 669, DCWL. See also Millie Pickett scrapbook, 1877, no. 28, and Clara Smith scrapbook, 1880, no. 18, both in col. 669, DCWL; Sarah and Sallie Mendinhall scrapbook, 1877–83, fol. 287, DCWL.



MARK TWAIN'S SCRAP BOOK.

THE great convenience and simplicity of this book will be readily appreciated by all. The pages are made adhesive, avoiding the use of any other preparation than moisture, so that the usual and well-known annoyances of paste, mucilage and sticky fingers, with all their accompanying evils, are completely remedied.

DIRECTIONS.

Moisten one gummed line first, so as to properly secure the top of the scrap, then moisten as many of the remaining gummed lines as you need to use, one at a time, pressing the scrap down as you proceed.

USE BUT LITTLE MOISTURE, AND ONLY ON THE GUMMED LINES.

DESCRIPTION AND STYLES.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS.

Paged and Indexed in Front.

Two column book, 7½x10, inches outside, with page 6½x9⅝ inches, excepting No. 0, which is 6¼x9¼ inches outside.

			Each.
No. 0,	60 pages,	Half Cloth, Paper	$0 65
" 1,	100 "	Half Cloth Paper	1 00
" 2,	150 "	Half Roan, Cloth	1 75
" 3,	100 "	Full Cloth, Stamped	1 50
" 4,	150 "	Full Cloth, Stamped in Black and Gold	2 00
" 6,	150 "	Full Morocco, Handsomely Stamped	2 50
" 7,	150 "	Full Russia, Handsomely Finished	3 25

OBLONG SCRAP BOOK FOR POCKET USE.

			Each.
No. 100,	48 pages,	Size, 3¾x8¾, 1 Column, Flexible Paper,	$0 15
" 110,	48 "	" 4¼x8¼, 3 " "	0 20

CHILD'S SCRAP BOOK.

			Each.
No. 120,	80 pages, size, 5¼x7½, 2 Columns, Half Cloth Paper,		0 40

DESCRIPTION AND STYLES.—CONTINUED.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS.

Paged and Indexed in Front.

Three Column Book, 10x12 inches outside, with page 9x11⅝ inches, except No. 00, which is 8½x11 outside

			Each.
No. 00,	60 pages,	Half Cloth, Paper	$1 00
" 8,	100 "	Half Cloth, Paper	1 50
" 10,	150 "	Half Roan, Cloth	2 50
" 11,	100 "	Full Cloth, Stamped	2 00
" 12,	150 "	Full Cloth, Stamped in Black and Gold	2 75
" 14,	150 "	Full Morocco, Handsomely Stamped	3 50
" 15,	150 "	Full Russia, Handsomely Finished	4 50

PICTORIAL SCRAP BOOK

Size, 12x16½ inches outside, with page 11x16 inches.

Handy for preserving Pictures. Gummed in squares suitable for pictures of all sizes.

			Each.
No. 20,	100 pages,	Half Roan Paper	$2 25
" 22,	200 "	Half Roan, Cloth	3 50
" 24,	200 "	Three-quarters Rus. Cloth, Bev. Boards,	5 00

DRUGGISTS' PRESCRIPTION BOOK.

Gummed in two wide columns, to suit the ordinary prescript, and is 10x12 inches outside, with page 9x11⅝ inches.

			Each.
No. 30,	Medium 4to, 200 pages,	Half Cloth Paper	$1 75
" 32,	" " 300 "	Half Roan "	2 50

Send your order or call and purchase one of Mark Twain's Scrap Books, and *use no other*. Copies will be sent by mail or express, pre-paid, on receipt of price.

Fig. 42. Interior of pamphlet in figure 41.

ship through gift giving by materializing emotion through the object exchanged.[133]

Production as Consumption: Trade Cards and Emotional Expression

The consumption of exchange cards in albums—which helped to fuel the public's fascination with chromolithographed trade cards—illustrates the importance that consumers placed on these small printed scraps of paper as they appropriated them for their own personal use. Although many collectors disregarded the commercial information on the reverse of the cards, logos and other identifying information remained on the front adjacent to pictures, as the clever placement of the Clark O.N.T. logo shows on an otherwise sentimental album page (see the baby page, fig. 39).[134] Even in cases in which the users pruned nearly all traces of commerce from the images pasted into their books, the users still knew where to find additional chromo cards—at the store or from the

[133] Stabile provides detailed evidence of the ways in which objects materialized memories for women in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in *Memory's Daughters*. Gift exchange is also discussed in Good, *Founding Friendships*; Carrier, *Gifts and Commodities*.

[134] Garvey examines this page in "Scrapbook, Wish Book, Prayer Book" and argues that it demonstrates a moment of fantasy play, even aspirational hope toward the future (110). However, in reviewing the complete album where this page appears, it became clear that this page was an anomaly: no other pages in this album displayed such clear attention to narrative or personal representations—most other pages focused on a theme, such as vegetables or presidents. In this way, the baby page aligns more closely with the paper doll scrapbooks examined by Beverly Gordon and others, rather than the collections of trade card scrapbooks I surveyed for this study. See Gordon, *Saturated World*, 37–62.

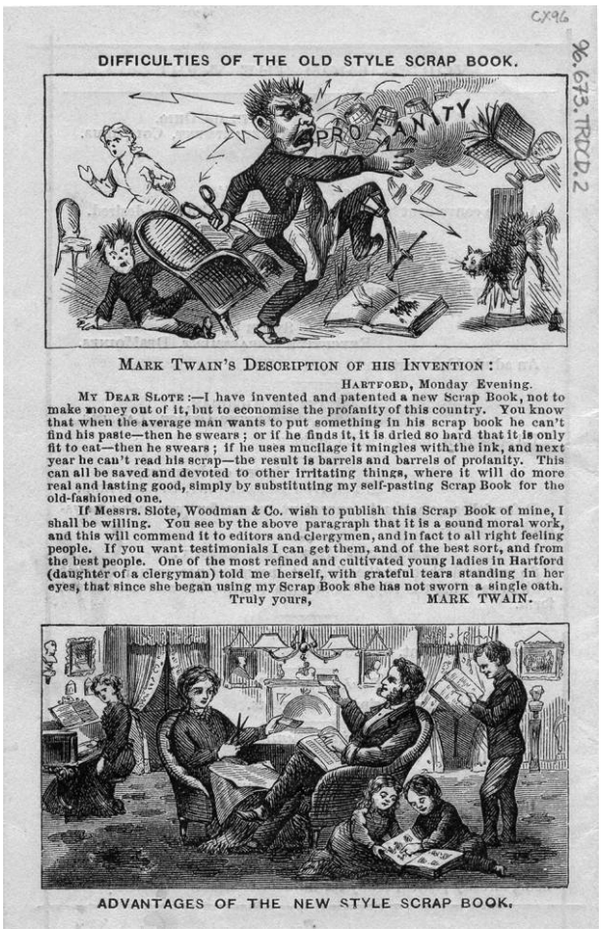


Fig. 43. Back page of pamphlet in figure 41.

manufacturer—as Emma Carnes's experience demonstrates.[135] Although seemingly unsuccessful in their advertising intentions, chromolithographed trade cards in fact succeeded all too well: they helped precipitate a cultural fad for collecting chromos and creating albums, which had an indirect effect of boosting product sales and consumption (even if individuals only purchased more products to obtain more cards).

Indeed, the key to understanding the reception of late nineteenth-century trade cards lies in uncovering their consumption—not just as found imagery that could be appropriated for personal use in albums but also as meaningful objects in their own right. Grafted into an older practice of album making, the cards—or at least the sentiment they symbolized for users—were a treasured component of interpersonal exchange in this period. They were so meaningful that, when actual cards were not available, individuals improvised. For example, Stella Morris Osgood kept an album in the 1890s that acted as both diary and scrapbook, sequentially recording events from her daily life and materializing these experiences through paper goods. In late February 1894 she received three hand-painted cards from Fanny Wright (fig. 52).[136] The beautiful watercolors intentionally mimic Prang's wildflower album cards, popular a generation earlier. The handmade reproductions may have been intended to serve as surrogate chromos, however augmented and improved because of their handmade status. Perhaps Fanny had seen Prang's album cards pasted in a tome by a friend or relative and saved for perusal by the next generation. Her creation of the hand-painted cards seems purposefully derivative of Prang's originals, especially the pansy card (see fig. 8), and as such it is difficult to imagine that she created them without any prior knowledge of chromos. Fanny's impulse to produce the handmade gifts for her friend makes the gesture all the more important: a true token from Fanny's heart for Stella. Yet Stella consumed them alongside other printed ephemera that symbolized aspects of her public and private life, suggesting that for her, the handmade cards not only bore resemblance to the other printed objects she saved, but they were equally as important.[137]

As striking as Osgood's album cards are, hand-drawn images like this were not unusual inclusions for scrapbooks. This fact points to the ways in which individuals' consumption patterns make it difficult to place albums into a single category, just as it is difficult to categorize exchange cards.[138] Like scrapbooks, autograph albums became repositories of images and texts chosen to represent oneself, community, and cultural desires and experiences. Continuing in a tradition of image making for albums that stretched back to the early modern period, signatories during the nineteenth century used hand-drawn imagery to enhance their entries in the albums of friends and family. The image be-

[135] See n. 98.

[136] Stella Morris Osgood scrapbook, ca. 1894, fol. 91, DCWL. It is unclear whether Stella bore any relation to the aforementioned Emma Osgood Carnes, although they certainly shared a keen taste for album making.

[137] Carrier notes in *Gifts and Commodities*, 156, that handmade gifts took on higher importance as the United States industrialized in the nineteenth century.

[138] Zboray and Zboray, "Is It a Diary, Commonplace Book, Scrapbook, or Whatchamacallit?"

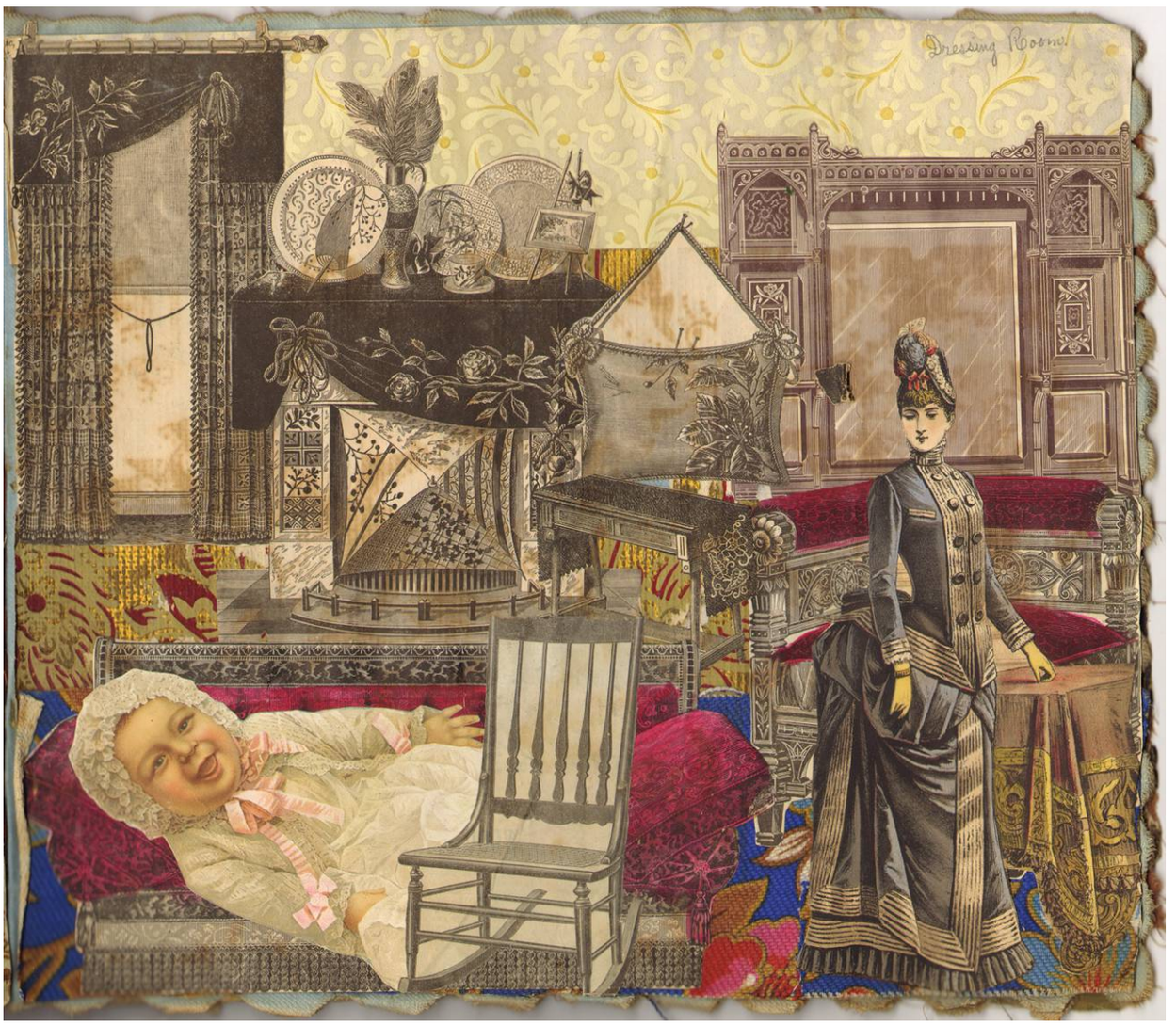


Fig. 44. Page from paper dollhouse album, ca. 1885. Collage; H. 10⅝″, W. 12¼″. (Fol. 371, Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

came a gift—each page produced by the signatory for the recipient. From the antebellum years forward, these album users often embellished their entries with ink-drawn and hand-colored scrolls, flowers, and doves; they inscribed their initials along the stems of hand-drawn flowers and rendered graphite bouquets to adorn their verse (fig. 53).[139] Drawings of flowers, such as the example from Camille Block's album (see fig. 27), are prevalent in autograph albums dated throughout the nineteenth century, which suggests that the images themselves not only may have served to adorn or embellish the written entries but may have been thought of as effective substitutes for the actual inclusion of pressed flowers. Embellishments were not limited to users' own drawings and pasted items, however, as some albums could be purchased with engravings depicting flowers, birds, and scenes in the life cycle.[140] In either case, for many writers images were

[139] Sarah Ruckman album, 1828–31, col. 798, DCWL; album marked "Maria," 1862–64, doc. 175, DCWL; Camille Block album, 1875–87, doc. 35, DCWL. On the practice of giving images as gifts in albums, see Rosenthal, "Fashions of Friendship," 624; Sanchez-Eppler, "Copying and Conversion," 301.

[140] See, e.g., Anne Hadley White album, 1880–1900, col. 134, DCWL.

Fig. 45. Pages from Elizabeth Wills Vernon Centennial scrapbook showing Louis Prang stock cards, 1876. Collage; H. ca. 9″, W. ca. 12″. (priJLC_FAIR, Jay T. Last Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

an integral part of emotional expression in autograph albums, regardless of whether they were preprinted or hand drawn.

In the 1870s album makers began including hand-drawn imagery that mimicked the appearance of exchange cards. The albums of Phebe Westcott, Lizzie Cadmus, Elizabeth Vernon, and Maria all include drawings that arrange signatures into shapes and patterns, mimicking a vision of cards spilling across the page (see fig. 48).[141] The volume of signatures on these facsimile cards visually emphasizes the popularity of the recipient—much like a stack of received calling cards would materialize a girl's personal relationships. But these women could have collected the signatures without such an arrangement and still memorialized their interactions. What the drawings add is a visual reminder of the material objects that carried so much weight in their own daily lives.

While these women visualized calling cards in their albums, Camille Block's album includes hand-drawn likenesses of stock trade cards (fig. 54). Just as earlier generations included ornamental pen work or watercolor paintings in album presents for friends, this writer has sketched a stock trade card for Block. The flowers in the pencil drawing appear within a demarcated space, while a blank text box overlaps the image in a striking resemblance to blank trade cards designed by Louis Prang in 1878 (figs. 55 and 56). Rather than a hand-drawn bouquet, as would be found in writers' entries from the 1850s, this writer chose to sketch a blank stock card with floral imagery. In so doing, the user has adapted the entry in the book to the changing imagery of popular culture: producing an image that mimicked commercial culture for sentimental consumption in Block's album. The image's appearance in this album demonstrates the sentimental importance that exchange cards held for many nineteenth-century individuals. When the actual token was unavailable for inclusion in Block's album, this writer chose to draw one instead.

Returning to Albert Whitman's page in Lizzie Cadmus's album (see fig. 1), it becomes clear that he likely drew the flower himself and intended it as a gift for her. In Whitman's choosing to memorialize his relationship with her through this image,

[141] Docs. 175, 447, and 1203, all DCWL.

Fig. 46. Page from Vernon Centennial scrapbook showing Corliss engine, Machinery Hall. (priJLC_FAIR, Jay T. Last Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

the drawing becomes a surrogate for the material token he perhaps wished he could give: the chromo card. As in Block's album, this page demonstrates a point of intersection between private and commercial culture in the United States. Albert and the anonymous artist who completed the drawing for Camille Block have appropriated objects of commercial culture—rather, they copied the objects and appropriated their cultural meanings—into what was otherwise a personal, semipublic display of friendship and interiority. Just as commercial culture might borrow from the codes of sentiment—printing flowers and children on chromo cards that sold banal objects like shoes—so too might objects of commerce be borrowed for use in communicating and displaying one's sincerity and emotion.

Including facsimiles of trade cards in their autograph albums allowed individuals such as these to substitute the image for the material object and to embellish signatures and verse in much

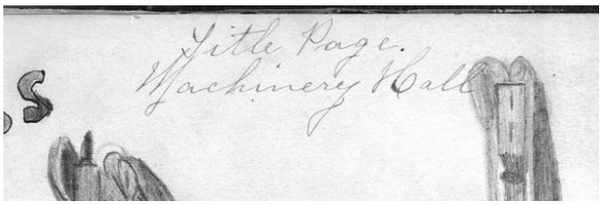


Fig. 47. Detail of page in figure 46 showing handwritten "Title Page./Machinery Hall."

the same way that pressed flowers and drawings did in earlier years. This practice suggests that the found imagery on chromolithographs (including hand-drawn copies of these images) became increasingly acceptable surrogates for real objects—when giving the gift of flowers or the gift of exchange cards. Arguably, this substitution was only acceptable because of the prized status of chromolithographs as culturally expressive yet readily available objects in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The Cadmus and Block albums use the iconography of chromolithographed exchange cards as a form of currency to communicate emotional connection and maintain social networks through the nineteenth-century culture of gift giving and sentimental exchange. In so doing, the signatories appropriated the materiality of a commercial medium—itself a borrower of sentimental culture—for their own goals. For them and the many users discussed above, receiving small chromolithographed exchange cards must have been a treasure. These portable objects expressed sentiment, memorialized experience, and concretized relationships in ways that the advertisers never intended. Or did they? It is possible that shrewd businessmen and printers, such as Prang, knew exactly what they were doing when they adapted chromos for advertising purposes in the 1870s.

To examine why trade cards were so popular between 1870 and 1900 is to uncover the material importance of trade cards as exchange media. Under close examination, the consumption of chromolithographed trade cards illustrates their position in nineteenth-century society as exchange cards first and advertisements second. Chromolithographed trade cards reworked an older exchange media by appealing to existing fads for collecting chromos and scrapbooking and therefore demonstrate advertisers' experiments in appealing to the public. Thus resituated within a culture of exchange, chromolithographs emerge as album surrogates that acted as tokens of the writer's feelings and regard for the receiver in the

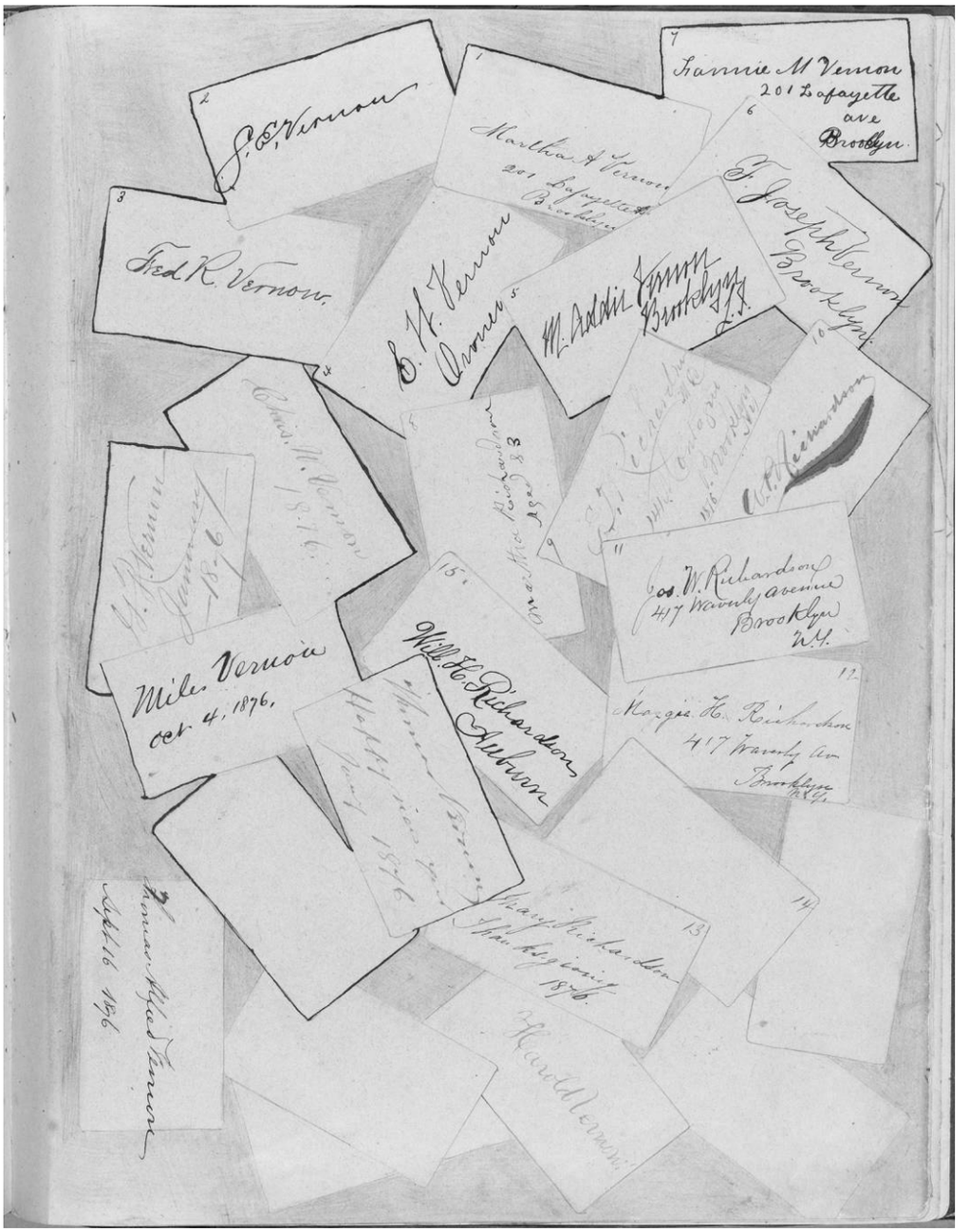


Fig. 48. Signature page from Vernon Centennial scrapbook. Ink and graphite on paper; H. ca. 9″, W. ca. 12″. (priJLC_FAIR, Jay T. Last Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

Fig. 49. Title page from Vernon Centennial scrapbook. Collage; H. ca. 9″, W. ca. 12″. (priJLC_FAIR, Jay T. Last Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

Fig. 50. Page from Burt Carr album, 1883–1924, showing poetry and pressed flowers, ca. 1883. Mixed media on paper; H. ca. 8⅝″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

Fig. 51. Inscription page and frontispiece, Ada Cocker album, ca. 1881. Mixed media on paper; H. 8¼″. (Thelma Mendsen Collection, Winterthur Library.)

place of actual pressed flowers, embroidery, and other sentimental handicrafts.[142]

Trade Cards' Decline

Trade cards peaked in popularity in the 1880s, and by the mid-1890s the chromo craze must have seemed like a distant memory to Americans looking forward to the new century's inventions. Many factors contributed to the decline of trade card production and distribution in the 1890s, including the promotion of magazine advertising over trade cards by advertising agents (who wanted more control over design), the rising subscriptions and wider distribution areas for magazines (which could reach the same audience without the added expense of a traveling salesman), and the new (and in many ways cheaper) photographic reproduction techniques used in magazines. Yet as consumable goods and scrapbook collectibles, chromo trade cards were eclipsed by two other rising media: postcards and photographs. The consolidation of the lithographic industry after the depression of the 1890s and the growing popularity of illustrated postcards meant fewer producers of handheld exchange cards and a shifting demand toward the mailing variety.[143] Finally, the decline of trade card consumption in scrapbooks coincided with a rise in snapshot photography and the compilation of photograph albums, especially after the introduction of the famous Kodak Brownie camera in 1900.[144]

[142] Echoing Stabile in *Memory's Daughters*, Vosmeier discusses the surrogate quality assigned to objects of personal importance and exchange in "Picturing Love and Friendship," 209.

[143] Jay, *Trade Card*, 100–102; Neil Harris, "Iconography and Intellectual History: The Halftone Effect," in *Cultural Excursions: Marketing Appetites and Cultural Tastes in Modern America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 304–17; Joshua Brown, *Beyond the Lines: Pictorial Reporting, Everyday Life, and the Crisis of Gilded Age America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 234–36.

[144] Archival evidence at the DCWL, HL, and AC NMAH supports the assertion that the collection of photographs and photograph albums changed from a primarily bourgeois pastime in the mid-nineteenth century into a more democratic pastime by 1900. In this way, while chromo-filled albums were highly popular between 1860 and 1900, photograph albums supplant albums filled with chromolithographs after 1900. On the growth of amateur photography and photograph collecting, see Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, *Scrapbook*, 12; Douglas Collins, *The Story of Kodak* (New York: Abrams, 1990); Andrea L. Volpe, "Cheap Pictures: Cartes de visite Portrait Photographs and Visual Culture in the United States, 1860–1877" (PhD diss., Rutgers University, 1999); Siegel, *Galleries of Friendship*.

Fig. 52. Page 10 from Stella Morris Osgood album, 1894–1909, showing hand-painted cards, 1894. Mixed media on paper; H. 10⅝″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

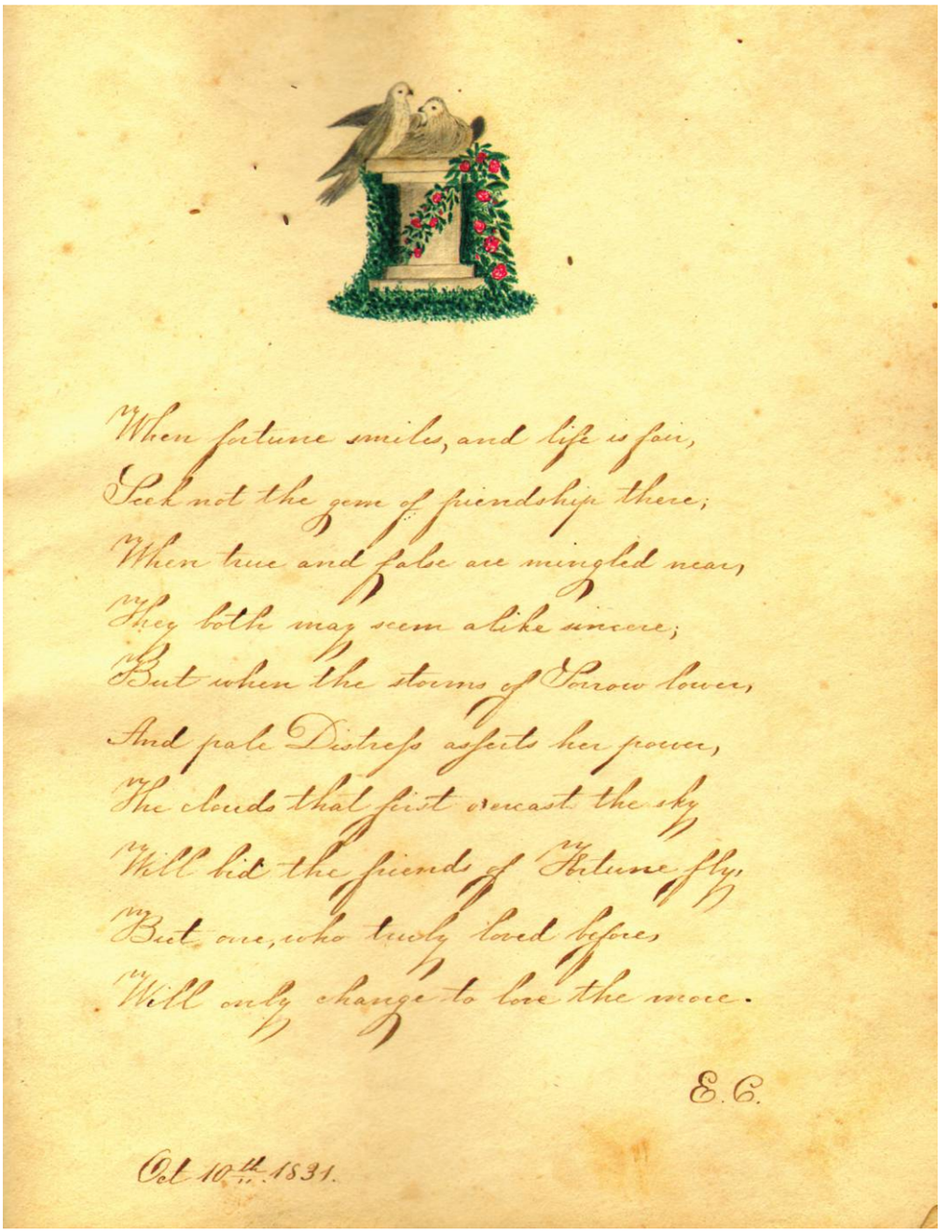


Fig. 53. Sarah Ruckman friendship album, 1828–31, showing entry signed E. C., October 10, 1831. Ink, pencil, and watercolor on paper; H. ca. 11 ¾″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

Fig. 54. Page from Camille Block album, 1875–87, showing drawing of a stock trade card. Graphite on paper; H. 8⅝″. (Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.)

From the standpoint of advertisers, trade cards could be considered a failed experiment. Users' willingness to reorient, trim, cut, and otherwise manipulate trade cards in scrapbooks and albums demonstrated their outright disregard for the commercial message as they privileged the image over text. Although trade cards' collectibility provided a positive benefit, in the end this collectible appeal led to their discontinued use as advertisements. And yet, even as the cards became prized objects that consumers gifted, regifted, and preserved in albums, the cards' commercial messages and origins could never be completely erased from viewers' memories. When advertisers experimented with trade cards in the 1870s, they appropriated and reworked the media circulating in an existing culture of reciprocal exchange and, in effect, made commodity exchange more like friendship.

It is only by resituating trade cards alongside other exchange media—such as calling cards and autograph albums—that we can begin to understand how trade cards transformed commercial exchange by drawing on a familiar iconographic language of devotion. Resituating the trade card in this way sheds new light on the moment at which chromolithography and advertising intersected, where the sentimental imagery of chromolithographs came into the service of commerce. The consequences of this meeting of personal and commercial helped to reconfigure the relationship between producers and consumers via advertising. Advertising histories that situate trade cards along a progression of advertising media (in other words, tracing the history of advertising from trade cards in 1880s and 1890s, through magazines, to posters in the 1910s–20s, to radio and television in the post–World War II years) thus fail to understand the ways in which the trade card acted as a material object for personal expression between individuals.[145] Trade cards acted as a form of currency—social, emotional, cultural, and racial—facilitating the expression of identities, the development and maintenance of networks, and the articulation of individuals' connections to the market. Trade cards did not inevitably foreshadow the success of magazine ads; they were an advertising experiment intended to capitalize on an existing cultural fad: the chromo craze. When examining trade cards' consumption in albums, it becomes clear that their materiality—the appearances, images, and exchange patterns of trade cards—firmly placed them within the realm of personal and emotional exchange between 1870 and 1900. Printers and advertisers appropriated sentimental and in-group imagery to facilitate the appeal of chromo cards, effectively repackaging sentiment as a form of entertainment. At the same time, individual consumers collected and pasted the cards into albums in an effort to better express themselves, their experiences, and their interaction with the public and private spheres of daily life. Finally, the albums of Lizzie Cadmus and Camille Block demonstrate the inherent emotional and cultural value of chromolithographed exchange cards. Copying chromo designs into albums—itself an act of consumption through production—points to the material and immaterial value that these ob-

[145] Scholars such as Gary Cross and Robert Proctor continue to examine trade cards as protomodern examples of the styles and language that would dominate later print forms, such as magazine ads. See *Packaged Pleasures: How Technology and Marketing Revolutionized Desire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 44–60, following the models proposed by Jay, *Trade Card*; Laird, *Advertising Progress*, 77–81; and Garvey, *Adman*, 19–50. Notably, historians of chromolithography situate trade cards not as elements in the development of modern advertising but rather within the history of printing, which includes posters and postcards. See, e.g., Last, *Color Explosion*; Marzio, *Democratic Art*.

Fig. 55. Louis Prang and Co., Boston, blank stock trade card, 1878. Chromolithograph; H. 3″, W. 4″. (JLC_prg, Louis Prang Papers, Jay T. Last Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

Fig. 56. Louis Prang and Co., Boston, trade card for Vienna Pressed Yeast, 1878. Chromolithograph; H. 3″, W. 4″. (JLC_prg, Louis Prang Papers, Jay T. Last Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.)

jects had as gifts and expressive icons. Public and private, commercial and personal blur together in the texts, images, and objects contained in nineteenth-century albums, pointing to the ways that the market reinforced sentiment by commodifying and selling it in entertaining advertisements. This reciprocal relationship between the market and sentimentalism—as demonstrated through the production and consumption of trade cards—thus demands our reconsideration of the place of advertising in nineteenth-century culture as well as the lingering trope of separate spheres.

Appendix

Over the course of two years, I viewed approximately 5,000 exchange cards in archival collections at the Huntington Library, the John W. Hartman Center for Advertising and Sales History at Duke

University, Winterthur Library, the Archives Center at the National Museum of American History, and the American Antiquarian Society. This total included cards that had been cataloged for a variety of uses (advertising, greeting cards, rewards of merit, sentiment cards, etc.), in both album and loose collections, with the range of dates falling between roughly 1800 and 1920, although the majority fell between 1876 and 1900. Of these, I recorded attributes on a sample of 3,059 cards, noting the following items:

1. Date (identified by copyright, trademark, or other relevant information on the card)
2. Size (which ranged from approximately 2 by 3½ inches to 4 by 5 inches)
3. Color (black and white, full color, one to three colors, or hand-tinted)
4. Printed on one or both sides
5. Stock or custom design
6. Primary visual motif (e.g., children, birds, flowers)
7. Printer (if identified)
8. Client (if applicable)
9. Client's location, if available
10. Product category, if applicable (e.g., foodstuffs, services)
11. Presence of a trademark/logo
12. Printing type (e.g., lithograph, engraving, or overpress)

The aggregate statistics from this survey represent a cross-section of exchange cards that circulated in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Of the cards I viewed, 23 percent were still contained in albums (77 percent of cards were loose). However, as I noted in the text of this article, a vast majority of the cards surveyed displayed marks of former scrapbook use (e.g., remnants of adhesive or paper from the scrapbook page).[146] Approximately 7 percent of the cards sampled in this survey were clipped or trimmed by users excising the imagery for scrapbook use.

Eighty-three percent of the cards sampled for this survey contained stock imagery, while only 17 percent represent custom designs. Defining the primary or dominant image on stock cards was occasionally a challenge since children were often depicted playing with shoes, wagons, or flowers, for example. In these cases, I determined dominant image by the size of the icon relative to the other compositional elements. Figure A1 thus illustrates the most common stock images used across the sample. It is important to note that flowers could be grouped together with other related themes under the rubric "nature" (which included birds, other animals, landscapes, plants, and other flora and fauna)—this category, as a broader theme, would comprise 39 percent of the sample. The category "industry" includes elements of technology, transportation, and manufacturing, such as boats, trains, and factories. The remaining 10 percent of the sample contained a wide variety of idiosyncratic imagery, such as history scenes, music, and religion (fig. A1).

Also affecting the relationship of trade cards and scrapbooks is that a great majority of the trade cards in the collections I viewed had been damaged through either their original scrapbook use or subsequent collectors' use. This damage was visible through the remnants of adhesive on the back, which makes it difficult to analyze their original or intended use by contemporaries. A further complication involves the rise of trade card collecting in the 1970s among ephemera connoisseurs, who often destroyed scrapbooks in order to remove individual cards for resale or inclusion in their personal collections. Evidence of this manipulation is present in the Thelma Mendsen Collection at the Winterthur Library, with the former owner (Ms. Mendsen) confessing to repositioning, repasting, and adding cards to her albums over the years (see, e.g., Album 16 in col. 669, DCWL).

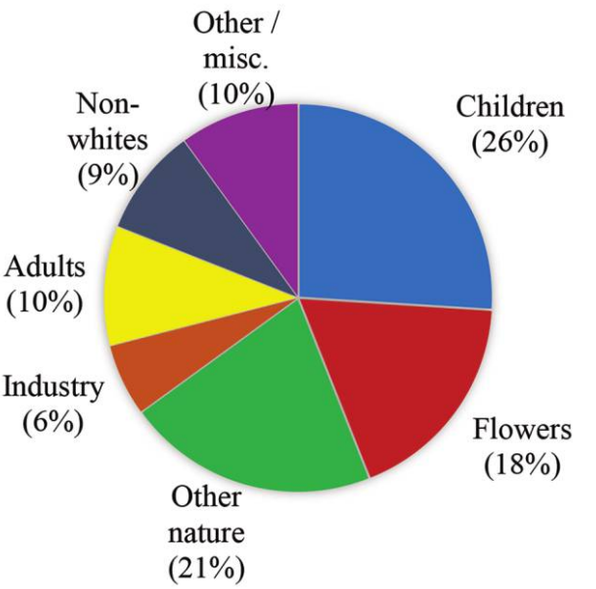


Fig. A1. Distribution of primary visual motifs on stock cards in the sample of 3,059.

[146] Glue remnants were not quantified during the course of this research because after the first hundred cards surveyed such marks became so ubiquitous that they appeared commonplace.