



Guide to the Lisa Unger Baskin collection of women's work and domestic arts ephemera, 1700s-1940s

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Summary

Collection Title:

Lisa Unger Baskin collection of women's work and domestic arts ephemera, 1700s-1940s

Creator:

Baskin, Lisa Unger, former owner

Source:

Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture

Abstract:

Collection assembled by Lisa Unger Baskin containing printed ephemera, receipts, manuscripts, handbills, catalogs, decorative trade cards, prospectuses, circulars, political campaign materials, and other advertisements from the United Kingdom, Western Europe, and the United States. The bulk of the collection's materials advertise businesses or services offered by women, including millinery, fancy goods, hair work, tea, painting, teaching, music, bricklaying, gardening, dressmaking, apothecaries, and a clairvoyant. Also includes calling cards and bookplates with women's names, and assorted ephemera relating to women's pay, income, or work, including a pensioner's card for a firefighter's widow and a pamphlet about life insurance for women.

Extent:

2 Linear Feet (3 boxes, 2 oversize folders)

Language:

Materials in English.

Collection ID:

RL.11975

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m1f15j>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Lisa Unger Baskin collection of trade cards, calling cards, and women's work ephemera, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

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Background

Scope and Content

Collection assembled by Lisa Unger Baskin containing printed ephemera, receipts, manuscripts, handbills, catalogs, decorative trade cards, prospectuses, circulars, political campaign materials, and other advertisements from the United Kingdom, Western Europe, and the United States. The bulk of the collection's materials advertise businesses or services offered by women or for women, including millinery, fancy goods, hair work, tea, painting, teaching, music, bricklaying, gardening, dressmaking, apothecaries, and a clairvoyant. Also includes calling cards and bookplates with women's names, and assorted ephemera relating to women's pay, income, or work, including a penioner's card for a firefighter's widow and pamphlets about life insurance for women. Some receipts, contracts, and statistics record rates of pay or income for women employees, or rates charged by women proprietors. Contains some advertisements for health-related retreats or vacations; circulars seeking to hire saleswomen or other women into different occupations; and some lending library slips. Includes examples of some Lippincott seed catalogs from the early 1900s, art samples and calligraphy by women, and some materials related to domestic arts and homemaking, including advertisements for patterns, sewing, cooking, and landscaping or interior decoration. Some materials relate to women's courtesy and conduct in public spaces, or to their appearance and clothing.

Biographical/Historical

Lisa Unger Baskin, born in Brooklyn, educated in New York City public schools and Cornell University, is a political activist, book dealer, and collector. She curated the Phillis Wheatley 200th Anniversary exhibit and the inaugural exhibition at the Elizabeth Cady Stanton House, Seneca Falls Women's Rights National Historical Park. She is on the faculty of the Colorado Antiquarian Book Seminar and the board of the David Ruggles Center for History and Education. (Excerpted from: 500 Years of Women's Work: The Lisa Unger Baskin Collection exhibit catalogue, 2019.)

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the Rubenstein Library's Citations, Permissions, and Copyright guide.

Acquisition Information

The Lisa Unger Baskin collection of trade cards, calling cards, and women's work ephemera was received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a purchase in 2015.

Processing Information

Processed by Meghan Lyon, March 2022

Accessions described in this collection guide: 2015-0050

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Names and Subjects

- Businesswomen
- Millinery -- History
- Fancy work
- Sexual division of labor

- Women -- History -- 19th century
- Trade cards
- Calling cards
- Courtesy
- Libraries -- History
- Political campaigns
- Life insurance -- History
- Homemakers -- United States
- Housewives -- United States
- Books and reading
- Lisa Unger Baskin Collection (David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library)
- Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture
- Lippincott, C. H. (Carrie H)

Collection Inventory

British and American trade cards, 1750s-1920s

Box 1

Scope and Contents

Decorative trade cards (ranging in size from 5x8cm to 11x19 cm) advertising businesses or services offered by women, including millinery, fancy goods, hair work, painting, teaching, music, bricklaying, dressmaking, apothecaries, and a clairvoyant. These trade cards all appear to originate from Great Britain or the United States.

Belgian and French trade cards, 1800s

Box 1

Scope and Contents

Decorative trade cards in French for women's businesses, in particular dressmaking and corsets (sizes range from 10x14 cm to 15x19 cm). These cards appear to originate from Belgium or Paris.

Calling cards and place cards, 1800s-1900s

Box 1

Scope and Contents

Examples of decorative women's calling cards, ranging in size from 3x9 cm to 6x10 cm. Also includes a set of place cards for Miss Marjorie Nicolson.

Printed ephemera related to women's pay, income, employment, or businesses, 1780s-1930s

Box 1
Oversize-folder 1
Oversize-folder 2

Scope and Contents

Assorted printed examples of items related to women-owned business ventures, pay, and income, including: life insurance for women brochures; advertisements and catalogs issued by women for boarding houses, ladies' classes, or gardening or grocery supplies; help wanted advertisements from various businesses, seeking women to hire for work as inspectors and door-to-door sales agents; a pay bill for Champfleurie Garderners' and Labourers' including Thomas and Mrs. McIntyre (1865); tickets, handouts, and circulars for services offered by women; lace specimen samples from Mme. Gurney and Co; a pensioner card for a firefighter's widow. There are some oversize materials in this section, including: a 1922 diploma (43x56 cm) for Nina E. Wilcox, earning a Philosopher of Chiropractic from the National College of Chiropractirs; a broadside advertising a 1914 recital by Louise Thornton, reader and impersonator in Boston; a broadside for Mrs. E. C. Cowdrey, Milliner, in Falls Village, Conn.; a Daly's Theatre playbill from 1884, printed on fabric, with advertisements for E. A. Morrison's Elegant Bonnets; and a broadside (34 x 42cm) advertising the 1839 sale of two adjoining tenements in Godalming, "Late the Property and Residence of the Widow Crouch, deceased; who for many years carrier on the Trade of a Cooper, and for which the Premises are well adapted." Includes an oversize issue of Moore's Rural New Yorker, vol. IV no. 5 (1853 Dec. 3). Includes a series of four issues of The Independent (1864 March 3, March 24, March 30, and April 7) containing an editorial "A Woman's Right to Labor" and subsequent responses.

Images of women at work, or relating to work,
1850s-1942

Box 1
Oversize-folder 1

Scope and Contents

Contains depictions and illustrations of women working on stationary, letterhead, and on advertisements. Includes an oversize poster (72 x 102 cm) of a white woman working on an aircraft flare, issued by the War Manpower Commission (1942). The poster reads: "Women in the war: We can't win without them." Includes Harpers Weekly pages: "New York Charities-St. Barnabas House, 304 Mulberry Street," dated 1874 April 18; "Our Women and the War," dated 1862 Sept. 6. Contains Illustrated London News pages with illustrations: "Emigration of Distressed Needlewomen," dated 1850 August 17; and "Printing-Office (the Victoria Press) in Great Coram-Street, for the employment of women as compositors," dated 1861 June 15; and Sanford Bank two-dollar bill, with images of women weaving, dated 1861.

Examples of correspondence relating to women's
employment, trades, and work, 1800s-1930s

Box 1

Examples of receipts, invoices, statistics, and contracts for women's labor and employment, approximately 1800s-1920s Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes a printed circular, "Statistics of Lowell Manufactures" (1848).

Women's calligraphy, lettering, art samples, 1800s-1900s Box 1

Materials relating to theater, arts, music, or performances, 1800-1970 Box 1

Materials relating to women in the book trade, publishing, writing, or reading Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes some examples of publisher statements, bookplates, and prospectuses. Also contains advertisement for The Semple Cutter, manufactured by Mrs. Mary H. Semple in Lowell, Mass.

Materials relating to healthcare, medical profession, and women in medicine, 1800s Box 2

Scope and Contents

Assorted printed and manuscript examples of prescriptions, medical literature, and advertisements relating to women's professional work in the field of medicine, or care for women's health. Includes a copy of Rhode Island Almanac for 1860 with an advertisement for Miss M.H. Mowry, M.D.; a 1935 reprint of Eye Troubles and their Cure, by the Misses Scarlett; and a copy of The New York Infirmary for Women and Children's Rules for Nurses, approximately 1920s.

Lippincott's seed catalogs and advertisements, 1895-1917 Box 2

Scope and Contents

Assorted examples of Carrie H. Lippincott's seed catalogs and advertisements, based in Minneapolis, Minn., promoting her flower and seed business as well as offering horticulture expertise. Also contains a 1915 seed catalog from Emma V. White, her rival.

Bookplates and lending library slips, approximately 1700s-1800s Box 2

Printed ephemera relating to domestic arts,
homemaking, and courtesy, 1880s-1940s Box 2

Physical Description: 2 folders

Scope and Contents

Includes a range of advertisements, pamphlets, and booklets relating to women's domestic pursuits, including sewing, cleaning, cooking, gardening, hosting, child-rearing, and other historically feminine activities. Contains some sewing needles and embroidery sample kits; dollhouse furniture; patterns; and recipes for sandwiches, canning, and baking. There are a set of three postcards with photographs of actors staging "The Bad Girl in the Family", by Frederick Melville, from the early 1900s. Also includes some poetry and other etiquette or courtesy-related published cards, encouraging "feminine" characteristics such as modesty, chastity, and piety.

Campaigns for political office, 1910s-1980s Box 2

Scope and Contents

Campaign handouts for Geraldine Ferraro and Leah Cobb Marion, and a bumper sticker for Bella Abzug.

Daily Herald special general election edition,
1929 May Oversize-folder 2

Scope and Contents

with "Women and Politics" pro-Labour Party article

Ladies' Cabinet false book, approximately
1800s-1900s Box 3

Scope and Contents

Empty wooden box decorated to look like Ladies' Cabinet book, intended to be stored on a bookshelf. Book's cover is a lid for the box, which opens to reveal a hidden storage compartment. Interior of the box lid has a small landscape with lace trim adhered to the surface, but no name or date information regarding the former owner.

Crochet needles case with painted leather
exterior, approximately 1800s-1900s Box 3