A History of NYC in 30 Objects

Presented by the Summer 2012 Student Historians

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A History of New York in 30 Objects:

The New-York Historical Society, one of America’s pre-eminent cultural institutions, is dedicated to fostering research, presenting history and art exhibitions, and public programs that reveal the dynamism of history and its influence on the world of today. Founded in 1804, New-York Historical has a mission to explore the richly layered political, cultural and social history of New York City and State and the nation, and to serve as a national forum for the discussion of issues surrounding the making and meaning of history.

Student Historians are high school interns at New-York Historical who investigate pieces from our vast museum and library collection, conduct research using the resources available to them within a museum setting, and collaborate on an education-minded project. This summer, our 30 Student Historians, representing NYC and the surrounding metropolitan area, are pleased to present their original project A History of New York City in 30 Objects.

Inspired in part by A History of the World in 100 Objects, a collaborative project of BBC Radio 4 and the British Museum, and also a current New-York Historical project to tell the history of the Civil War in 50 objects, this summer’s group of Student Historians each chose an artifact to reveal a piece of NYC’s rich history. When pieced together, the 30 artifacts selected create a patchwork of NYC events, figures, and turning points that not only expose intriguing stories of NYC’s past, but also the varied interests of the 30 Student Historians conducting the research.

The intent is that this research project will provide an enjoyable read for those interested in the history of New York, and also enrich school program development at the New-York Historical Society.

The following essays are all researched and written by the Summer 2012 Student Historians, and compiled in chronological order. Each essay is prefaced with a title page introducing the object, document, or artwork from the N-YHS collection that will be used to discuss a particular moment in NYC history.

For more information on the New-York Historical Society Museum & Library and the Student Historian program, please visit our website: www.nyhistory.org.

Enjoy!

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Title: *Pulling Down the Statue of King George III, New York City*

Maker: Johannes Adam Simon Oertel

Date Created: 1852-1853

Presented by Leo Vartorella
In 1766, New Yorkers praised King George III for repealing the much-hated Stamp Act of 1765, and commissioned a statue of him to be built in his honor. Ten short years later, they tore it down. The statue, erected in 1770, was torn down on July 9th, 1776 by a group of about forty men. Their patriotic feelings were roused after the Declaration of Independence was read publicly for the first time in New York City. This act is depicted in the painting *Pulling Down the Statue of King George III, New York City* by Johannes Adam Simon Oertel, who painted it from 1852 to 1853. Oertel was a German national who relocated to the United States in 1848 after completing his artistic training in Munich. While he became a reverend later in life, he was originally discouraged from painting religious scenes. Instead, he focused on patriotic, American themes for his earlier work.

Tearing down the statue was a deeply symbolic act, and demonstrated not only the desire of New Yorkers, but of the entire nation, to be independent. Americans knew that their self-determination could only be won by a war against their British oppressors. Those that tore the statue down sent it up to Connecticut to be melted into bullets. This was both practical and allegorical, for it turned a symbol of tyranny into a weapon used to fight it. The Battle of Brooklyn took place on August 27th, 1776, and was a direct result of New Yorkers showing their defiance to British rule. 32,000 British troops first moved to Staten Island from the Canadian coast before descending upon Brooklyn, driving General Washington and his troops out. It was the first in a series of defeats for Washington that eventually led to the Americans being pushed out of New York City altogether. While it is difficult to argue that any military defeat can be beneficial, their defeat in Brooklyn did encourage the United States to invest more into a standing national army. Nonetheless, with Washington driven out of the city, the British occupied New York until the end of the war in 1783, when the Treaty of Paris was signed.

The subject of Oertel’s painting is historically significant for New York, but the painting itself also has quite a bit of historical value. Oertel painted this event almost eighty years after it took place, and while it represents what he thought it might have been like, it is by no means a completely accurate snapshot of
the scene. In Oertel’s painting, New York’s trademark diversity is evident even in 1776. Both loyalists and patriots are in the park, as well as women, children, and a Native American family, but surprisingly only one black person. It is known that both slaves and freedmen helped in pulling down the statue, but it is unclear which of these two groups the man in the painting belongs to. However, seeing as how the ratio of slaves to freedmen was roughly 4:1 in New York during this time, it is much more likely that he was a slave. While Patriots and American soldiers look on with interest, the loyalists look appalled, as expected. Oertel’s juxtaposition of loyalists and patriots reveals a difference in not only their national affiliations, but also in their character. While loyalists are passive, simply watching the scene as it evolves, Americans are taking matters into their own hands. The painting is very much a romanticized representation of the triumph of the American spirit, with Americans demonstrating their culturally intrinsic urge for freedom. The Native American family, unlike everyone else in the painting, has their backs turned towards the spectacle. They seem to be indifferent to the Revolution, and instead fear the prospect of war, no matter who is fighting. However, this view of Native Americans is slightly shortsighted, as certain tribes did in fact take sides during the war.

This painting represents not only American values, but also the irrepresible energy of New York and its residents. New Yorkers could no longer tolerate the oppressive, British rule, and had to do something to signify their desire for independence. Destroying the statue of this British monarch was a tangible representation of New York’s transition from being an outpost of British rule to a truly American city. With the statue’s destruction came a new era in American history, and the next chapter for New York.
Works Cited:


Title: Matched set flintlock dueling pistols w/accessories

Maker: H.W. Mortimer & Co.

Date Created: 1780-1800

Presented by Estefania Herrera
Duels have been around since the Medieval Times in Europe. In the 18th century in New York, like most territories in the United States as well as around the world it was acceptable to get into a duel. Duels have died out in many places, but in the 18th century, it was common in some social communities. A duel is a demonstrated arrangement between two individuals to employ in a fight with agreed rules and weapons. Most duels in New York were carried out in public areas mainly with pistols; in some cases swords were used as the weapon of choice. Duels were considered to be a code of honor, a representation of chivalry among men, especially military officers. The pistols were not originally the weapon of choice, in the 17th century swords were used for duels. Pistol dueling started in Europe and moved into the Colonial United States, however, by the Civil War it eventually died out in the Eastern United States. In the Western United States, pistol duels continued because of an absence of common law.

A well-known duel in the United States, also known as the Duel at Dawn, occurred on July 11, 1804, in Weehawken, New Jersey. The pair of flintlock dueling pistols in the Henry Luce III Center at the New York Historical Society Museum are similar to the pistols used in the 1804 duel. The set of cased dueling pistol contains about 57 accessories which are made of wood, brass, iron, silver, and lead. The pair of flintlock pistols in the collection belonged to Rufus King, and the museum received them as a gift from Mr. Gheradi Davis and Ellen King. Rufus King was a politician and a well-respected diplomat yet he is best known for being a Senator of New York. King was a lawyer and a skilled debater, as well as a flagrant member of the Federalist Party. The 1804 duel is very significant because it was a duel between former Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton and Vice President Aaron Burr. At the end of this duel, Hamilton would be mortally wounded and Burr would be wanted for murder. Burr was charged with murder in New York and in New Jersey, however the charges did not reach trial.

Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr were political rivals with a hostile relationship. Burr was the representative of the Republican Party, and in the elections of 1800, he was placed as a Democrat-Republican in his campaign to become President. On the other hand, Hamilton was the chief author of the
Federalist papers; papers which promoted the idea of a strong central government. The climax of the conflict between Hamilton and Burr was reached in 1804, as a result of Hamilton's dissatisfaction with Burr's attempt to be re-nominated for Vice President as well as his attempt to become governor of New York, hoping to revive his political career, proposed the duel to Hamilton. Hamilton wanted to refuse, but that would mean he would lose his honor; therefore he accepted the challenged offered by Burr. Hamilton, being the recipient of the duel, was the one who chose the weapons. Hamilton turned to his brother-in-law, Colonel John B. Church, for advice. Church advised Hamilton to keep his honor, by dueling with his pistols. Church was the original owner of the pistols Burr and Hamilton used.

Burr's pursuit to become governor of New York State in 1804 led him to have a violent confrontation with Hamilton. Early in 1804, Hamilton tried to convince New York Federalists not to support Burr and his ideas. In the end, Burr was defeated by Morgan Lewis who became the third governor of New York. Morgan Lewis, was a Republican candidate, who gained support with the help of George Clinton and DeWitt Clinton, two powerful New York Republicans. George Clinton was the first governor of New York and his nephew, DeWitt Clinton, was the sixth governor of New York. DeWitt Clinton attacked Burr and his supporters; John Swartwout, one of Burr's supporters, challenged DeWitt Clinton to a duel. In 1802, Clinton met with his opponent leaving nonfatal wounds; however he shot two bullets into Swartwout’s leg. The book written in 1963 by Hamilton Cochran about hostile encounters and American duels states that the duel was “the most determined political duel ever fought in New York State...It was a similar political dispute which two years later caused the duel between Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr.” As a result of this duel, Burr's effort to win governorship in 1804 for New York State was challenged by DeWitt Clinton.

The duel between Hamilton and Burr took place in Weehawken, New Jersey, early in the morning. Each man fired a shot from a .56 caliber dueling pistol that belonged to John B. Church. Aaron Burr was left unharmed, while Alexander Hamilton was mortally wounded, as he fell to the ground. Hamilton's shot hit a tree branch, while Burr's shot penetrated Hamilton's abdomen. A New York Times article
from July 2, 1954 describes the incident, “Hamilton fired into the air, but Burr scored one shot into his adversary’s abdomen.” The article states that after Hamilton was mortally wounded he died the following day. He was transported across the Hudson River to New York in efforts to save his life. He was taken to his friend’s home, the home of William Bayard, but it was no use and Hamilton died. Aaron Burr challenged Alexander Hamilton to the duel in hopes of reviving his career; however, because of Hamilton’s death, his career took a different turn. The charges against Burr did not reach trial, however in November of 1804 a grand jury from a New Jersey County accused Burr of murder. The New Jersey Supreme Court overturned the accusation, and as a result Burr fled to South Carolina but soon returned to complete his term as Vice President in Washington D.C. With all the recent events in his career, including the 1804 duel, Burr’s political career ended.

The flintlock pistols in the Luce Collection at the New York Historical Society were crafted by the artist H. W. Mortimer in London, the same gunsmith that made the pistols used in the 1804 duel between Hamilton and Burr. The pistols that Burr and Hamilton used were the same pistols which caused Philip H. Hamilton’s death; Philip was Alexander’s eldest son, who fought a duel against George I. Eacker on November 23, 1801, three years before his father died. The 1804 duel caused a major change in the view of duels. In the book Famous American Duels by Don C. Seitz, it states that Charles Cotesworth Pinckney wrote, “dueling is no criterion of bravery...cowards fight duels, and I am convinced real courage may be better shown in the refusal than in the acceptance of a challenge.” Such words led South Carolina to forbid duels by law. Ideas like these spread, and eventually led to end of the duels in the entire Colonial Eastern United States.
Work Cited:


Title: *The Great Fire of 1835*

Artist: Nicolino Calyo

Date Created: Sometime between 1836-1840.

Presented by Karen Cruz
In 1835, much of New York City was destroyed by a very disastrous event. This event is known as The Great Fire of 1835, a very damaging occurrence early in New York City’s history. Since The Great Fire happened very early in the history of New York, it definitely was a turning point for New York City. Although the fire indeed did a lot of damage, it resulted in major improvements for New York as a whole.

In the 19th century, citizens in New York City and most American cities lived in fear of just a single spark igniting and causing a major fire. The reason behind this is that unlike today, fires rapidly spread and could not be controlled effectively. The poor living conditions of most New York residents was not any help for this either. These residents lived in very small and crowded areas. They lived in rickety wooden buildings, and had very little access to water. The New York City Fire Department was not equipped to fight a fire of this scale. This was shown when the Great Fire was ignited on December 16th, 1835. The conflagration was ignited at a five story warehouse on 25 Merchant St. when a burst gas pipe was ignited by a coal stove. When the firefighters reached the scene they tried to use water from the nearest source, the East River. Being that the fire happened during the winter, the water from the river was frozen, therefore the firefighters had to make holes in the ice to be able to use the water. The firefighters also tried to use the water from the pumps and hoses, but even that water began to freeze. The firefighters came across another idea, which was to attempt to blow up every building in the fire’s path, but of course that did not happen. As the firefighters continued to analyze how they could stop the blazing fire, firefighters in Philadelphia spotted the fire from afar and rushed to New York City to offer their help.

The conflagration continued to rapidly spread. The fire raged through an area of bordered walls and broad streets destroying about 700 buildings and badly damaging many more. The Great Fire devastated most of the old colonial city, which had survived the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, and also destroyed the New York Stock Exchange. Being that the fire was so big, over fifteen thousand people volunteered to help battle the blaze. Unfortunately, a bad combination of obsolete firefighting methods and frigid winds spread the fire more, and made it
even harder to stop. That led to the fire raging for two days. The Great Fire surely was a very disastrous event in the early history of New York City that led to new beginnings.

The Great Fire impacted a painter by the name of Nicolino Calyo. This artist arrived in New York City two days before the fire had begun. Calyo, being a witness to the fire, was shocked and felt like he could and should paint what he saw happening with his own eyes. Calyo made three paintings that depicted the Great Fire. In each painting the blazing fire is seen from different points of view, such as across the East River. The paintings help give an idea of how huge the blaze was and how it was seen from different distances. Calyo’s paintings of the Great Fire are very well known and are found in several museums in New York City. Thanks to Nicolino Calyo, New York City residents are able to have an exact idea and see for themselves how the Great Fire of 1835 impacted New York’s history and understand why it is called the Great Fire. After Nicolino Calyo made these paintings he returned a year later to New York City as a notable painting professor.

In the New-York Historical Society there is one of Nicolino Calyo’s paintings about The Great Fire of 1835. The painting is in the ‘Portraits of the City’ hall. The museum was given this painting as a gift from Samuel V. Hoffman in 1910. The painting is oil on a canvas. The painting depicts the East River and three boats on the river. Across the river is the blazing fire. Calyo painted from the perspective of the side of the river, and one can see people standing around near the edge of water watching the city in flames.

About ten years before the Great Fire; the Erie Canal was created. The Erie Canal connected New York City to raw materials and commercial interest in the Midwest. This led to New York’s rise to prominence as a national and international market hub. Since most of New York City’s money went into the creation of the Erie Canal, by the time money was needed for the massive reconstruction of buildings and infrastructure that New York needed after the Great Fire, New York City did not have enough. The Mayor in New York City at the time was Cornelius Lawrence, the first elected mayor in New York City. After the fire, what Mayor Lawrence decided to do was storm down to Washington with his entourage and beg for aid. Although
there was some opposition, voters approved the construction of the Aqueduct in 1836.

The construction of the Aqueduct was the city’s plan to improve the water supply system. A man by the name of John Bloomfield Jervis was in charge of the construction of the aqueduct. The name of the aqueduct was the Croton Aqueduct; which is New York City’s first water supply system. John Bloomfield Jervis also directed the construction of Croton Dam and Reservoir, as well as the Aqueduct Bridge. With just these water supplies system, New York City had already made a lot of improvement. New York was experiencing a burst of rapid reconstruction and things from then on got better. The Fire Department also made changes. Every time there was a rapid growth in the population of New York City, more firefighters were added to the Fire Department. They became more trained and prepared for fires, and had even more equipment. The New York City Fire Department began giving their residents certain materials to have at home in case of any emergencies. They also began to prepare them more and more as the years went by.

Although the Great fire of 1835 was a great tragedy in New York City, it brought about change and improvement for the city. The Great Fire brought a water supply system into the picture and improved the Fire Department. The Great Fire was a wakeup call for New York residents to realize that something needed to be done to prevent fires from happening as often as they did in New York’s early history. Thanks to the Great Fire, fires today are controlled and are easier to stop from spreading.
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Painting By: Nicolino Calyo  
at the N-YHS ‘Portraits of the City’ exhibition  
1910.06

2) www.virtualny.cuny.edu/FIRE/welcome.html

3) Firefighting Case  
At the N-YHS Upper Mezzanine


5) http://theboweryboys.blogspot.com/2009/03/known-your-mayors-cornelius-lawrence.html

Title: *Landscape, Sunset*

Maker: Asher Brown Durand

Date Created: 1838

Presented by Victoria Greene
They say a picture is worth a thousand words. This may not be true for all pictures, but for the painting *Landscape, Sunset* by Asher Brown Durand, nothing could be more accurate. Despite its rather bland title, the painting has countless stories to tell about artistry, history, and identity. In appearance, *Landscape, Sunset* is naturalistic, with meticulous care paid to the brush strokes and details. Juxtaposing a dark, solemn foreground with a bright background, Durand captures the delicate balance between dark and light when the sun retreats behind the horizon. Aside from simply being a talented painter, Durand was one of the most prominent members of the Hudson River School. The Hudson River School was a group of landscape painters that originated in New York, and was the first authentically American school of art. Established in 1825 and declining in the 1870s, it was the dominant art school in the U.S. for the majority of the 19th century. With their depictions of the American wilderness, the Hudson River painters carved out an identity for this country,

In many ways, the Hudson River painters were a product of their time. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the United States underwent a period of massive expansion. It all began with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Under President Thomas Jefferson, the U.S. purchased nearly 900,000 square miles of territory, known as Louisiana, from France for just 15 million dollars. Spanning from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains, the Louisiana Territory doubled the size of the United States. In 1804 the boundaries of the West were pushed even further when Lewis and Clark embarked on their famous trek across the country, travelling as far as the Pacific Ocean. With the newly acquired open wilderness of the West, Americans grew fiercely nationalistic. They were awed by the seemingly endless vastness of the American wilderness and sought to glorify it in any way possible. Among the pioneers of this nationalistic sentiment were, of course, the Hudson River School painters.

The first truly American school of art, the Hudson River School gave the United States the cultural identity that it had been lacking for half a century. Filled with pride for their country the Hudson River painters depicted the American landscape in its utmost glory and grandeur in a style reminiscent of European
romanticism. However, they were determined to carve out their own, truly American, style and, in the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, “ignore the courtly muses of Europe.” To the Hudson River painters, the American landscape had something to offer that Europe could not match; it was untouched, completely natural wilderness, shaped only by the hand of God. The landscapes of Europe had nothing to offer but trace after trace of human interference, and no area was truly untouched. Soon, many people began to liken America’s landscape to its independence and greatness. Its beauty inspired its people and its artists.

Further inspired by the beauty of nature, the Hudson River painters adopted the philosophy of the American transcendentalists. The American transcendentalists emerged as religious reformers in the 1830s, unhappy with the structure of the Unitarian Church. However, their movement soon gained immense popularity and their ideology spread far past the Church. The transcendentalists maintained that God was ever-present in nature and stressed the unity of all things. A rejection of the rationalism that had been so prevalent in the eighteenth century, transcendentalism emphasized spirituality and divine inspiration over logic and reasoning. The Hudson River painters’ romanticized landscapes reflected these ideas as they constantly showed the painters’ admiration of nature. In particular, the painters had great appreciation for the ever-changing nature of the natural world, and strove to capture these changes in their works. They tended to paint the same locations over and over again in different conditions, such as time of day, time of year, and weather. So captivated by the natural beauty of the countryside, the Hudson River painters wanted the landscape to remain the way it was meant to be. They believed that if nature were left undisrupted, mankind would get a little closer to God.

The Hudson River painters often created pairs or series of paintings to enhance the meaning of their artwork. They tended to tell stories or make statements through contrast. They often painted contrasting landscapes, seasons, lightings, and human disruption of nature. One might think of the paintings in these series as chapters in a book, or installments of a television show; alone, these paintings were simply aesthetic, but together, they were able to convey much
deeper meanings. One of the most famous examples of a series of paintings from the Hudson River School is Thomas Cole’s *The Course of Empire*. *The Course of Empire* is a series of five paintings depicting the path of a thriving civilization, from its origins to its destruction. The first painting, *The Savage State*, shows a primitive mankind living off the land. In the next painting, *The Pastoral or Arcadian State*, man has begun to harness the land, and small structures and farms have emerged. The third painting shows man at his finest hour, *The Consummation of Empire*. Mankind has completely overridden nature, with grandiose buildings constructed as far as the eye can see. The next painting, entitled *Destruction*, shows man’s great empire falling apart. War has broken out and everything is being consumed by fire. In the last painting, *Desolation*, the empire has been completely destroyed and nature has taken over once again. Standing alone, these paintings would have been mere depictions. Together, however, they make a bold statement about civilization, implying that the presence of mankind is cyclic. Cole’s painting shows that, although man may reach great heights of civilization, in time it will all come crashing down, and nature will take over the land once again.

Thomas Cole is often credited as the founder of the Hudson River School. Although born in England in 1801, he moved to the United States when he was 17 and immediately fell in love with the landscapes. After developing as an artist, Cole moved to New York and began painting in the Catskill Mountains and the Hudson River Valley. His paintings were bold and striking with detailed brushwork. For Cole it was never good enough to merely depict a landscape; he infused his depictions of American scenery with lessons in morality and spirituality that he hoped to transfer to his viewers. Almost immediately, Cole became famous, and his works were suddenly in high demand. As the new center of the New York art scene, Cole started to be noticed by artists all over the world, and his groundbreaking romanticized depictions of American landscapes began to inspire a host of other painters.

One of the artists inspired by Cole was his friend and contemporary Asher Brown Durand. After Cole’s early death in 1848, Durand became the new leader of the Hudson River School. Considerably less philosophical than Cole, Durand was
usually content with simply doing a landscape justice, not infusing it with further meaning. His most common subjects were forest scenes. Fascinated by the effects of light, Durand sketched and painted the different ways light hit the trees. In stark contrast to Cole’s bold, looming depictions, Durand preferred soft, glowing images, always containing his characteristic warmth and expressiveness. Durand admired Cole, and considered his works vital to the development of landscape painting, but pushed his contemporaries to expand landscape painting beyond the boundaries Cole had established during his lifetime.

Two later Hudson River painters who pushed the boundaries of landscape painting even further were Frederic Church and Albert Bierstadt. Church, a former pupil of Thomas Cole, distanced himself from the nationalistic sentiments expressed by the earlier painters. Instead, he focused on the vast, exotic landscapes of South America. He also travelled to Israel and the Arctic to find subjects for his paintings. Bierstadt, on the other hand, was enthralled by the American West, constantly painting sites like the Rocky Mountains and Yosemite. Although the later painters strayed away from the intentions of the first generation of the Hudson River School, the reverence of nature that had originally defined the Hudson River School still remained.

After dominating the American art scene for almost 50 years, the Hudson River School began to decline at the end of the nineteenth century. Though their time may have come to an end, their place in American art is eternally set in stone. The Hudson River School painters were more than just a group of artists; they represented everything that New York, and the United States, is. They made up the first authentically American school of art, forever marking New York as the country’s forerunner in creativity and artistry. They carved out an identity for this country with their depictions of the American wilderness, proclaiming to the world that this is American Art; this is what our country is all about.
Works Cited:

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Title: Unknown

Maker: Unknown

Date Created: Circa 1840

“A whale ship was my Yale College and my Harvard.”

-Herman Melville

Presented By: Erik Alfieri
Scrimshaw, as defined by *Webster's Dictionary* is, "any whale tooth or bone, tusk, or shell, with carved or colored images." However, it has come to represent whaling as an industry, and gives us insight into the lives of the crew of the whaling ships which essentially “lit the world” with the oil they produced. Folk art it can be ornate or simple, often depending on the tools available during the “down-time” of the artist. From Melville to John F. Kennedy, these works have captivated many, not just because of their beauty, but because of the truly *American* story they tell.

Whaling was at its height between the 1830s and 1850s when hundreds of whaling ships travelled the globe, often taking years to fill their holds with oil. This massive industry would continue to be hugely profitable, and would remain so until the discovery of petroleum in 1859, when the whaling industry began its steep decline. At its height, there were over seven hundred commercial whaling ships in the United States, almost all of which operated out of New England. These ships had the capacity to hold three times the load of a regular merchant vessel. The practice of actually hunting the whales was done by harpooning the whale in a small vessel that would hold 5-8 crew members who would allow themselves to be pulled by the whale, in what became known as a “Nantucket sleigh ride.” They would continue to do this until the whale would exhaust itself, whereupon the crew would mount the whale and spear it to death. After killing the whale they would tow it back to the ship where the useful parts of the whale would be harvested and stowed below deck. What attracted men to this perilous profession was the financial rewards it promised, as many whaling vessels split the profits at the end of a voyage.

New York was by no means the center of the whaling world. The greatest whaling ports of the Northeast were New Bedford, Nantucket, and Martha’s Vineyard, where almost all whaling vessels were based. However, as it was one of the largest industries in the United States at the time, New York businessmen and merchants were heavily involved. As New York was the banking capital of the U.S., whaling captains looking for funding would often look in New York, where banks and benefactors were excited by the prospect of investing in an industry that often promised heavy returns. As whale oil was what lit most lamps around the globe, such an investment was usually sound, and the only risk investors ran was losing
their ship in a storm if the ship were to sink. Since New York, even predating the creation of the “modern” stock exchange in 1876, was the center of the US market economy, the sale and distribution of whale products were a large part of the market. From the whale blubber, used to make oil, to household products made of whale-bone, those wishing to buy and sell, no matter what the quantity, could do so in New York City. With the advent of the oil well, whaling steeply and steadily declined, and as its practicality lessened, New York just as quickly forgot the industry and moved on to more profitable endeavors.

Little physical testament to the industry remains, but there are vast quantities of scrimshaw of all different kinds that have lasted. Each tells a different story, and sheds some light onto the life of the creator. As voyages could last years, members of the crew had much down time in which they would use what was available to them to depict their lives. They would often do so through carving familiar scenes such as their ship, home-port, or a distinguished member of their crew. We can look at the carvings, many of which are intricate and beautiful, and learn much about the ship and crew. As we get an idea of what the ships were like, we can get an even better idea of how cramped and uncomfortable years long voyages could in fact be. Because many of these sailors simply considered this a “hobby,” and because it had little artistic value at the time, most did not sign their work. Therefore we only know of a few “scrimshanders,” which unfortunately is not the case for The New-York Historical Society’s collection of scrimshaw. Though ornate and beautiful, we do not know the origin of the carvings.

What was once no more than a way to pass time, the creation of scrimshaw has become one of the most iconic forms of American Folk Art. It came to symbolize an entire way of life and industry. In recent history, the collection of scrimshaw has increased substantially due to a growing interest in maritime history; some of this interest has been sparked, posthumously, by John F. Kennedy, who was a prodigious collector of scrimshaw. Little else remains of the industry, other than Herman Melville’s novel *Moby Dick*, which is arguably just as much a celebration of whaling as scrimshaw. Despite being such a popular form of folk art, the art of making scrimshaw died along with the industry in the second half of the 19th century.
Works Cited:


Title: Naval Officer's Sword and Scabbard


Date Created: 1852-1862

Presented by Yusra Ahmed
Lavishly displayed at a corner in the New York Historical Society are *The Officer's Sword and Scabbard*, which belonged to Commodore Uriah Phillips Levy, the first Jewish naval officer in America. He was not only a naval officer, but also an altruistic businessman. Being highly engaged in stocks and real estate in New York City, he bought and restored Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson, saving it from ruin. His sword is presented as a memento to his grandson, Jefferson Monroe Levy, who continued his philanthropic efforts in preserving Monticello. The sword itself reflects the contributions of Commodore Levy and his nephew, as well as the rapidly changing economy and industrial boom transforming New York City from 1852-62.

The demand for housing rose dramatically as the city was undergoing a major population expansion in the mid-1800s. Real estate in sparsely populated areas like lower Manhattan was rapidly bought at cheap prices and then sold after a few years at advanced rents. According to Melvin I. Urofsky in his book, *The Levy Family and Monticello*, three of Levy's rooming houses brought him an income of $3,500 a month, when the average American earned only $600 a year.

Levy highly venerated Thomas Jefferson—once stating, “I consider Thomas Jefferson to be one of the greatest men in history—author of the Declaration of Independence and an absolute democrat. He serves as an inspiration to millions of Americans.” The abundant wealth gained from Levy’s real estate successes in New York financed the restoration of Monticello, as close to its original form. The previous owner of Monticello took poor care of the estate. In his will, Commodore Levy had left it to the government of the US or the State of Virginia, as a naval orphan asylum. But Jefferson Levy took hold of Monticello and continued expanding and repairing it after his uncle’s death.

As a survivor of the War of 1812 and a distinguished man of courage, Commodore Levy was promoted several ranks. However, he was also demoted twice due to his pugnacious reactions towards corporal punishment and other common practices of the US Navy at the time. Levy was a firm advocator of human rights who thought the navy’s conducts were barbaric. By 1850, he and his supporters had convinced Congress to pass the Anti-Flogging Act, which prohibited
whipping as a means of punishment. This ruling revolutionized the American navy before the British navy, since they did not abolish flogging until three years later. Commodore Levy was soon known as “The Author of the Abolition of Flogging in the Navy of the United States.”

Commodore Levy along with other New Yorkers was highly involved in the Stock Exchange. New York was transforming into a financial district. With the constant shifting of businesses, older buildings were razed to make room for new ones. Fortunes of industrialists and railroad tycoons grew with the flourishing times. However, with economic progress came ruin for those who were less fortunate. The elite of New York pushed for internal development across the slums in the city, in fear of disease and crime. The period was also marked with tremors that shook Wall Street with the Panics of 1837, 1857, and 1873. Major calamities included business failures, bank closings, and high unemployment due to overexpansion, speculation, and delayed reconstruction. The extensive depression that followed brought even more people to New York, with the promise of bargains. Wholesalers in Manhattan offered entire stocks at reduced prices. With these constant financial and industrial fluctuations, New York was shaped into the bustling business center it is today.

_The Officer’s Sword and Scabbard_ not only reveals the generous contributions of Commodore Levy and his family, but also the transformation that occurred within the heart of New York during the time the sword was in use. New York’s success is greatly due to the efforts of those like Levy, industrial improvements, and the knowledge gained through economic and societal failures.
Works Cited:

Title: The Snake Jug
Maker: Anna Pottery
Date created: 1859

Presented by Olaluwa Onabanjo
The historical view of the share of wealth and political judgments in New York City and the societal response is detailed “Snake Jug”, an object produced by Anna Pottery (1859). Its design depicts the political corruption in New York while focusing on an infamous political group known as the “Boss Tweed Ring.” The group had astounding effects on the politics of New York through its political scams and corrupt policies. The pottery was a gift to Thomas Nast, a political cartoonist who was firmly against the Boss Tweed Ring. The pottery shows the Boss Tweed ring as snakes with human heads surrounding a jug with Nast’s head on the jug’s neck and political sarcasms written around the jug. Several snake jugs were designed as symbols supporting the Prohibition Era; however, this snake jug was designed as a symbol representing political corruption in New York and its major contributors and as an accolade for Thomas Nast.

Tammany Hall was established in 1789 as a fraternity but grew to be the most influential political group in New York City in the 1800s. It was originally known as the Society of St. Tammany but as it became more involved in the political affairs of New York, it became known as Tammany Hall, the influential Democratic political machine. The Tammany Hall incorporated the authority of the Mayor’s office, the Democratic Party and its own power as a social club organization into its dealings. By helping the political candidates get into their desired positions, Tammany Hall was able to control the candidates through blackmail and other corrupt means. The Tammany Hall majorly controlled the Mayoral Office in New York. An example of the use of political authority as a benefit to Tammany Hall members was when Fernando Wood, a Tammany Mayor, used his power to help William March Tweed, commonly known as Boss Tweed, become chairman of the New York County Democratic Party in 1860. Tammany Hall dominated the politics of New York for about 80 years; from the election of Mayor Fernando Wood in 1856 to the election of Fiorello LaGuardia in 1934.

The Tweed Ring hired immigrants, gave them sources for shelter and helped them become citizens in return for their votes to political candidates that were favored by the Tammany Hall in city and state elections. The Tweed Ring which
operated in the Tammany Hall accumulated its funds from desperate and corrupt corporate executives who were willing to give bribes in exchange for city contracts which were granted by the head of the Tweed Ring, a corrupt political man known as Boss Tweed. The Tweed Ring paid enormous amount of money to contractors who did their work with minimal quality and time during the construction of the New York County Courthouse; for example, Andrew J. Garvey, a Tweed Ring supporter and a Tammany functionary was paid $360,751 which values about $4.9 million in today’s economy for two days’ work. The Tweed Ring’s influences on the masses’ votes by providing necessities, paying the contractors unfairly in return for their political votes influenced the politics of New York immensely because numerous corrupt politicians won political elections for prominent and influential political positions such as the City’s Mayor through the help of the Tweed Ring.

Political corruption in New York was not absent after Boss Tweed’s imprisonment, it continued on a more corporate and larger scale, thereby influencing the economy of New York and the United States at large. Tammany Hall’s political influence in New York ceased with the beginning of the Great Depression. During the Great Depression, most of the immigrants who had earned their jobs through the help of the Tammany Hall lost their jobs and their assets. Due to a lack of funds from the Democratic Party, the Tammany Hall ceased to function on its normal scale. Despite these odds, Tammany Hall remained a very influential political group in New York until the Great Depression. When the New Deal was instituted under the Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Tammany Hall experienced a setback with one of its most supportive groups, immigrants, due to the restriction on immigration which made people less dependent on Tammany Hall for assistance. After the Great Depression, the Tammany Hall returned to power under the leadership of Carmine De Sapio who engineered a number of elections including the New York attorney general election which led to Franklin Delano Roosevelt Junior’s defeat in 1954. Eleanor Roosevelt and her old friends formed the New York Committee for Democratic Voters with the goal to ameliorate the original democratic process which enabled the people’s free will without influences such as
De Sapio’s Tammany Hall influence. In 1961, De Sapio lost the leadership of Tammany Hall and Tammany Hall eventually lost its political influence.

In 1868, a Republican cartoonist who worked for Harper’s Weekly magazine began to attack the Tammany Hall and the Democratic Party. Thomas Nast depicted the Democratic Party as “a live jackass (donkey) kicking a dead lion.” He characterized Boss Tweed as a sleazy criminal who had New York “under the thumb.” He also characterized the Tammany Hall as the “Den of Corruption and Fraud.” Nast’s cartoons against Tammany Hall were so profound to the extent that when Tweed escaped from jail and fled to Spain in 1876, he was arrested by officials who recognized him from Harper’s Weekly images.

Throughout history, residents of New York view political corruption very differently amongst themselves, however they have been a great audience and their reactions have been extraordinary. A more contemporary example of a person using her artistic medium to express her political views, like Thomas Nast, is Ayn Rand, an author known for her firm republican views concerning political corruption in her books such as Atlas Shrugged and The Fountainhead. She describes the political corruption in New York and her hatred for it due to its effects on ethical people and describes the corporate drive for money as the foundation of the failure of the Capitalist system in the United States of America. Political corruption has always been a current topic in the history of New York and it continually captivates the residents of New York.
Works Cited:


Collection of The New-York Historical Society

Title: *Carte de Visite of Abraham Lincoln* 1860
Maker: Mathew Brady
Date Created: February 27, 1860

Presented by Jeremy Losak
It is February 27, 1860 in Mathew Brady’s Studio at 643 Broadway in Manhattan, New York. Abraham Lincoln is in the city to make a speech later that day at the Cooper Institute (Cooper Union) in front of a large Republican audience to help bolster his nomination for the Republican candidacy in the next presidential election. Lincoln plans on taking this photograph with one of the most well-known photographers in all of New York, Brady, who is well known for his photographs of the rich and famous. Before the photo is taken, Brady instructs Lincoln to draw up his collar to hide his imposing neck and show off his appearance as a whole. Brady’s goal was to make use of Lincoln’s height and make him look like less of a rough westerner and more like a proper statesman. Produced as a carte de visite, a photograph on paper that is mounted on stiff card stock, this photo became the benchmark image of Lincoln and his lasting legacy. Lincoln went as far to say after he was elected, “Brady and the Cooper Institute made me president.”

Lincoln was invited by James Briggs to come to New York to participate in part of a lecture series at the Plymouth Church. Briggs served on the lecture committee for Plymouth Church and highly advocated for Lincoln to participate. Lincoln was thrilled at the opportunity to introduce himself to a New York audience being that New York was an important state to have in the upcoming election. Lincoln gladly accepted the proposal to speak about a political topic to a Republican audience. The speech almost did not take place because the original sponsor pulled out for economic reason, but luckily for Lincoln, the Young Men’s Republican Union took over sponsorship of the speech and moved it to a much larger venue in the grand basement hall at the Cooper Institute.

Abraham Lincoln arrived in New York on February 25th 1860. He settled down at the Astor House Hotel, located on Broadway between Vesey and Barclay Streets, a hot spot for other famous literary and political celebrities. Also, Lincoln visited the offices of the Independent, an antislavery newspaper. The owner of the paper, Henry C. Bowen, asked Lincoln to attend church with him the following day at the Plymouth Church. Lincoln very much wanted to hear the preaching of Henry Beecher, who was a very well-known antislavery preacher. The following day, Lincoln and Bowen crossed over to Brooklyn on the ferry, and attended the
Plymouth Church on Atlantic Avenue. Following the service, Lincoln returned to the Astor House where he spent the rest of the day slaving over his imminent speech.

Before traveling to the Cooper Institute on February 27th, Lincoln decided to get photographed by the esteemed Mathew Brady at his studio. After solidifying his image, Lincoln began his trek to securing his nomination. William Cullen Bryant, editor of the *New York Evening Post*, began the festivities by introducing Abraham Lincoln to the audience as a “gallant soldier” in the “battle we are fighting for Freedom against Slavery: on behalf of civilization against barbarianism.”

Afterwards, Lincoln approached the podium as many curious Republican eyes glazed about this mystery man from the West. They had heard stories about his epic debates against Stephen Douglas in the Illinois congressional elections, but they had never had the opportunity to see or hear him in person. Lincoln’s main object in his speech was to take the words of Douglas and use them against him. Douglas said in a speech in Columbus, Ohio, in the autumn of 1859, “Our fathers, when they framed the Government under which we live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now.” The question that Douglas is referring to is whether or not slavery should be allowed to be expanded into the territories and whether or not the people have the right to decide. Utilizing his skills that he built as a lawyer in Illinois, Lincoln agreed with Douglas’s point and then used those exact words to attack Douglas’s known support of popular sovereignty. He deduced using specific instances when founders sided on legislation that banned the expansion of slavery into the new western territories or gave the Federal Congress power over it, that the vast majority original framers of the Constitution agreed that only the Federal government had the power to regulate slavery in the territories. One of these instances was the Ordinance of 1787 which forbade slavery in what were the new territories in the Northwest. Lincoln provided multiple members of the original framers of the Constitution that also voted in favor of the Ordinance of 1787. Thus, those fathers that knew the answer to the question “better than us” said that slavery should not be expanded.

The conclusion of Lincoln’s speech was followed by an immense amount of cheers. The spectators were mesmerized by the composure of Lincoln on the
podium and the great oral abilities that Lincoln displayed. Lincoln was invited by Nott and Hiram Barney to attend a congratulatory supper at the Athenaeum Club hosted by several members of the Young Men’s Republican Union. After enjoying a hearty dinner stimulated by intellectual political conversations, Lincoln went to the offices of the New York Tribune to proofread copies of his speech before they were distributed to the public.

Over the next few days, Lincoln’s speech was reproduced in dozens of different newspapers and pamphlets in New York and throughout the country in both English and German. Democratic papers challenged the competency of the speech. The Democratic Herald described Lincoln’s speech as “unmitigated trash, interlarded with coarse and clumsy jokes.” The Republican papers took the opposite approach and raved about the speech. After listening to Lincoln’s amazing speech in person, William Cullen Bryant enthusiastically supported Lincoln’s candidacy and wrote many positive editorials in the Evening Post. The headlines for the Evening Post the next day read: FRAMERS OF THE CONSTITUTION IN FAVOR OF SLAVERY PROHIBITION. Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune, commented, “No man ever before made such an impression on his first appeal to a New York audience.” Greeley felt that the other Republican candidate William Seward could not capture Western states and that Lincoln was a better choice for the Republican Party. After Lincoln’s speech, Greeley understood that Lincoln was the only Western Republican that had any real momentum on the East Coast.

Abraham Lincoln marketed himself to the public as three different figures during the election. First, he wanted to appear as a proper statesman that United States citizens could be proud to represent them. He accomplished this in his carte de visite with Mathew Brady. Second, he wanted to appear as a great orator that could captivate people with his voice. This image was made very clear after his Cooper Union address. Third, Lincoln wanted people to think of him as “Honest-Abe.” During his trip to New York, Abraham Lincoln was able to accomplish two of the three things that were necessary for him to sell his presidency. By visiting New York in February 1860, Abraham Lincoln took the first major step to becoming the 16th President of the United States.
Works Cited:


3. Lincoln, Abraham. “Cooper Union Address.” Speech, Cooper Institute, Manhattan, NY, February 27, 1860.


*Title: Enfield Pattern 1853 Rifle Musket*

*Maker: Royal Small Arms Factory*

*Date Created: 1862*

Presented by Matt Felsenfeld
Tensions had been growing since the birth of the nation. The North, densely packed and industrial, relied on Southern agriculture—specifically cotton—to produce the manufactured goods on which it sustained itself. As the country expanded westward, the question became whether to make new territories “slave states or free states” as they were admitted into the Union. When Abraham Lincoln, a northern Republican who detested slavery, was elected in 1860, the Southern states were furious. On March 4th, 1861 seven southern states seceded. Not long after the secession, Confederate gun batteries in the Charleston harbor in South Carolina opened fire on the Union military base of Fort Sumter. The only casualty was a Confederate horse. In response, Lincoln called on 75,000 soldiers from the Union States.

The influx of soldiers in the Union Army needed equipment: uniforms, bags, bedrolls and, more importantly, guns. Few guns were used exclusively by either the Confederate Army or the Union. There were, however, some exceptions. In the Confederacy, a revolver known as the LeMat was made for cavalry regiments. This gun had a second barrel, which was meant to be filled with buckshot. This allowed the pistol to double as a shotgun. The British arms manufacturer Royal Small Arms Factory built guns for both sides in the war. One of their most prominent guns was the Pattern 1853 Enfield Rifle Musket. The musket was given grooves in its barrel so that the projectile would spin as it exited the weapon. The 1853 Enfield used a .577 caliber ball and a Percussion lock firing mechanism—common to many of the small arms used during the Civil War.

The soldiers in the 128th NY Volunteer regiment used the rifle. Said regiment was recruited from counties around New York City, such as Duchess and Columbia counties. It was then assembled in Columbia, New York on September 4th, 1862. The Regiment served mainly in Louisiana, Virginia and North Carolina. In Louisiana, they assisted the siege of Port Hudson—the battle that won the Union control over the Mississippi River. Much of the regiment was taken captive during the Battle of Cedar Creek on October 19, 1864. This specific rifle, engraved with a crown emblem and the words “tower 1862”, was used by William Henry Althause.
He enlisted on August 8th, 1861 at age 21 in Fishkill, NY. After the war, he went on to marry a Sarah A. Smith and lived until 1926. Carrie Althause, his daughter, donated the rifle in 1950. William Althause was one of the many soldiers to serve with the NY 128th Regiment during the war.

After the attack on Fort Sumter, one of the first units to respond was the 7th New York Militia. The regiment was recruited in New York City and had existed before the war. Unlike many other regiments at the beginning of the war, these soldiers were well equipped, well fed, and had full uniforms. They were called “one of the best appointed and drilled militia regiments then in existence.” As they departed for Washington D.C., they paraded down Broadway in front of cheering crowds as pre-ordained heroes. They then went through Jersey City, NJ through a similar crowd of cheering people. They were originally meant to take a train through Baltimore, however, pro-Confederacy rioting in the days prior had forced them to change their route. They instead went through Annapolis, Maryland, and took a steamship from there to Washington DC, and arrived on April 25th. The regiment then helped build Fort Runyon—a wood and earth fort on the banks of the Potomac River—and was housed in the capitol building. Instead of going south with many of the other northern regiments, the New York 7th returned to New York on June 3rd. They were mustered in to service several more times and helped subdue rioters during the New York Draft Riots of 1863.

The New York 7th Militia carried a nickname that explained the exceptional quality of their training and equipment: the “silk-stocking regiment.” These soldiers came from some of the wealthiest families, such as the Vanderbilts and the Roosevelts, in the Union and were funded accordingly. The regiment’s armory,
located on Park Avenue, was the only one of its kind built with private funds. Parts of the armory were designed by people such as Louis Comfort Tiffany and Stanford White. Before leaving the city, each soldier in the regiment was given a sandwich from Delmonico’s—a high-end New York restaurant—and a satin stool on which they could sit while eating.

The regiment was accused of not doing their part during the war, as some of the only combat they saw was during the draft riots. Newspapers either poked fun at them or praised their service. A New York newspaper of the time stated in their article, *Poking Fun at the Seventh Regiment*, “The critic concludes as follows: ‘after the drill was over—which terminated at nine o’clock—the fine young fellows separated, highly delighted with the tones of the bugle, and ready to go out again, if called upon to fight for the Union and the Constitution.’ Several of our friends, who were present, say this is all a lie.” After their return to New York, the regiment’s duties were limited to ceremonial marches and drills for the public. Their willingness to go and fight was questioned by the people of New York. The newspaper *The New York Sun* defended them in stating, “They nobly fulfilled their engagement with the government.” After the draft riots in 1863 and their mustering out that followed, the New York 7th militia continued to have ceremonies and military drills through the 20th century.

New York City played an important part in the Civil War. It sent many regiments of cavalry, artillery, volunteers and militia to fight for the Union. The diversity of the city is revealed in the diversity of the regiments sent: From the 6th New York Militia—known for being from the rougher neighborhoods in Manhattan—to the 7th New York Militia whose soldiers came from affluent backgrounds; or from the 69th infantry regiment—known as the “Fighting Irish”—to the 7th New York volunteer infantry regiment, called the “Steuben Guard” for the German heritage of its soldiers. New York’s service in the Civil War was an accurate reflection of the range of cultures in the city.
Works Cited:


Title: Draft Wheel

Date Created: 1863

Presented by Ilana Newman
Draft wheels like this one were commissioned in 1863 for the first draft in U.S. history, and functioned as a method of picking men for service in the Union army during the Civil War. Cards listing the names, occupations, and addresses of all eligible men were placed in the wheel. After being spun, cards were picked out of the wheel by an official. The men whose cards were chosen were drafted into the Union Army. When this draft wheel was donated to the New-York Historical Society in 1865, it contained 3,600 cards. This wheel was meant to be used in the draft for the Seventh Congressional District, which was located in the Lower East Side area. However, the New York City draft riots broke out before this wheel could actually be spun. During the Civil War, this wheel was in the possession of Frederic C. Wagner, the Provost Marshal of the Seventh Congressional District. Wagner was the only New York City Provost Marshal to survive the uprising. He donated the wheel to the New York Historical Society after the Civil War had ended.

On April 12, 1861, the Civil War began with shots fired on Fort Sumter. Eager volunteers quickly filled the regimental register. However, by 1863, enthusiastic volunteers were hard to find. Fewer men were enlisting, yet New York still needed to furnish 28,500 men to fill the state’s required quota of troops. On the 3rd of March, 1863, Congress passed the Conscription Act, which authorized a military draft lottery of all single men between the ages of twenty and forty-five, and all married men up to thirty-five. In addition, the act included a commutation clause, which allowed a draftee to avoid service if he could procure a substitute, or pay a fee of three hundred dollars.

Americans prided themselves on their land of equal social and economic opportunity; however, the Conscription Act’s commutation clause went against this ideal. While wealthy members of both political parties took advantage of the commutation clause to avoid military service, the Republicans seemed especially hypocritical, as they simultaneously praised the ideals behind the Civil War, yet avoided personal danger. Wealthy entrepreneurs, such as J.P. Morgan, John Rockefeller, and Andrew Carnegie, were able to avoid being drafted, leaving the working class, who were not able to pay the equivalent of a year’s salary, to be
drafted into the “rich man’s war, poor man’s fight.” This inequality increased resentment of the upper class and of Republicans in particular.

The draft was very unpopular with the citizens of the United States, and riots broke out thought the nation. However, the most violent outburst was in New York City. These riots were mostly fueled by racial animosity and conflict between poor immigrants and the wealthy residents of the city. Copperheads, extreme anti-war Democrats who opposed Lincoln and the Republican Party, inflamed racial tensions by informing New York’s mostly Irish immigrant population that the recently issued Emancipation Proclamation would allow newly freed slaves to flock to New York City and vie for their jobs. This was a significant concern to immigrant New Yorker, as since New York’s emancipation in 1827, immigrants had competed with black residents for menial, unskilled jobs. The Copperheads’ manipulation of the immigrant population further increased antagonism towards the free blacks of New York City, as the immigrant population did not want to fight in a war that, if won, might cause additional unemployment.

The draft began at 10:30 a.m., on Monday, July 13th, 1863, at the Ninth District draft office, which was located at Forty-sixth street and Third Avenue. Even today, historians do not know who started the uprising. For the past four hours, workers had been recruiting fellow laborers, preparing to protest. Despite the threat of protest, only a small number of policemen were assigned to guard the draft office. However, as the crowd of demonstrators increased, fifty more policemen were requested. The protest was meant to be peaceful, and was so at first, until the “Black Joke” Fire Engine Company 33, a primarily Irish company, arrived and destroyed the office, kick-starting the violent uprising, and beginning four days of violence in New York City.

Although the riots were initially politically motivated, the situation quickly turned into a race and class riot. After the attack on the draft office, assaults were aimed at areas that, to the mob, represented the wealthy or the “Republican.” The offices of Horace Greeley’s New York Daily Tribune, a pro-Republican newspaper, were burned. Insurgents targeted well-dressed citizens and robbed the homes of the wealthy, who were assumed to be Republicans. In addition, the mob targeted the
police force, not only because of their efforts to stop the uprising, but also because of the police’s close ties with the Republican Party. Protesters also targeted stores and purveyors of luxury items. On the second day of the riots, the Brooks Brothers’ store, located in lower Manhattan, was looted. Brooks Brothers not only sold clothes to New York City’s wealthy citizens, but also made clothing for the Union army. In attacking Brooks Brothers, the mob attacked a symbol of New York’s wealthy and of the Civil War as well.

New York City’s black citizens were also targeted by the mob. Numerous institutions that were owned or inhabited by African Americans were attacked, such as the Colored Orphan’s Asylum, the Seaman’s Home for Black Seamen, and the Colored Sailors Home. Rioters assaulted African Americans on the street, and in some cases, ferociously murdered them. The mob prowled black neighborhoods, attacking the homes of black citizens. In addition, the insurgents targeted the homes of whites who were sympathetic to the blacks’ cause.

At noon, on the second day of riots, New York City mayor George Opdyke wired Edwin Stanton, the current Secretary of War, to send Federal Troops to New York City to suppress the violence. The rioting continued until the end of the fourth day of the uprising, when over four thousand federal troops arrived from the battlefield at Gettysburg to suppress the rioters. The increased military presence allowed for a tenuous period of peace, although there were a few occasional outbursts of violence. Throughout Thursday, protesters continued to attack the troops, killing many high-ranking army leaders. However, the troops fought back, and imprisoned several of the rioters, finally ending the last battle. The draft riots officially ended on Friday, July 17th, 1863.

It is estimated that seventy thousand people rioted in total. Six African Americans were lynched, and thousands of others were beaten. New York City’s black population decreased by a fifth in the two years following the riots, as blacks fled the city in large droves during and after the riots. In the end, an estimated one hundred and five people were killed, and the city was left in ruins.

The federal draft began again two days later, on July 19th, 1863. This time, to suppress any possibility of rioting, twenty thousand federal troops were stationed
in the city, and the draft progressed without any problems. Tammany Hall Democrats saw that the public was angry, and were eager to take advantage of that anger. During the uprising, Tammany officials, including William “Boss” Tweed, were on the streets trying to calm the rioters. After the riots had ended, Tammany Hall eased public concerns by successfully lobbying with the federal government to reduce New York City's draft quota, supervising the draft to alleviate concerns about the draft’s fairness, and helped create a fund to pay the commutation fee of any individual who could not afford to leave his family. Tammany Hall appealed to the concerns of the Republican population by condemning the rioters’ lawlessness and firmly prosecuting them. However, these trials were mainly for show. Four hundred and fifty rioters were arrested, but only sixty-seven rioters were actually convicted, and by generously bribing many officials, all convicted were given very light sentences. Tweed’s actions during the aftermath of the draft riots allowed him to rise from the ruins and cement himself and Tammany Hall at the center of New York City's political future.
Works Cited:
Title: Bass Drum

Maker: unknown

Year created: 1836

Presented by Sonia Brozak
By the late nineteenth century New York had become a booming cultural center, allowing for classical music culture to thrive and grow. Music has always been a large part of the background of the United States, but New York’s history in particular has largely shaped music history. Today we appreciate concerts and shows on Broadway, in Madison Square Garden, at Lincoln Center, and many other cultural hubs that we consider primary attractions. In order to understand how many of these centers came into existence one can look to a particular drum (pictured at right).

The Drum

The drum of concern, created in 1868, in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, was owned by Harvey B. Dodworth. Born on November 16, 1822, Harvey B. Dodworth’s most notable achievement is as the leader of the second all-white brass band in the country (second only to that of Boston). The greater Dodworth family also had major influence as a musical dynasty from 1840 through early 1920. The Dodworth family immigrated from Sheffield, England to New York in 1826. Thomas Dodworth Sr. brought his four children, Harvey, Allen, Charles, and Thomas Jr. Within a decade, the Dodworth family had established a domain of musical instrument shops, a music academy, print shops, a publishing company, dance schools, and began to create a legacy in New York’s musical society.

A portrait of Harvey B. Dodworth, which the New York Historical Society currently possesses, accompanied the sale of
the drum. The portrait (pictured on previous page at left) features Harvey Dodworth in his band uniform, holding his instrument of preference, the cornet. Sheet music lies under Dodworth’s arm, entitled “Cornet Solo [by] H. B. Dodworth”. Chas. W. Jenkins painted the portrait in 1857 and exhibited it at the National Academy of Design later that year.

The First Brass Band

Harvey Dodworth became the leader of his father’s band, the Dodworth New York City Cornet Band, in 1839. In 1826 Thomas Dodworth Sr. established Dodworth’s Cornet Brass Band. Allen Dodworth, the oldest Dodworth son, conceived the idea for a brass band. Dodworth suggested that an ensemble made of only valve instruments, or brass, would invoke a military style, an unprecedented idea during peacetime. As the band began to expand, drums were added in order to keep time.

As for the music, the band played a range of tunes including arrangements of songs, marches, quicksteps, and dances such as quadrilles, waltzes, polkas, gallops, and schottische. Nearly all music the band played had to be arranged specifically for the instruments involved due to the uncommon nature of such an ensemble of pieces. New York took well to brass bands, as did the rest of the country. Antebellum New York considered the Dodworth Band and the 7th Regiment New York State Militia Band to be the two best brass bands in America.

Central Park

Harvey Dodworth led Dodworth’s Cornet Brass Band to success, bringing brass band music to the masses of New York with weekly concerts in Central Park, the first of the type. Dodworth’s band played at the Concert Ground and the Mall, drawing huge crowds of mostly middle-class New Yorkers, every Saturday afternoon in the summers. The programs often included pieces written and published by the Dodworth family (Allen T. Dodworth composed hundreds of pieces for the band, in addition to becoming a prominent voice in the dancing circles of New York). Harvey Dodworth’s most prodigious addition to music history is his adaptation of Richard Wagner’s works for brass bands. Carl Bergman, of the
Germania Musical Society, is credited with being the first person to play Wagner's works in the United States. Soon thereafter, Harvey Dodworth adapted them to a new American-style of playing, for an all-brass band. Many of Dodworth’s programs featured European works, excerpts from operettas and operas, and newly written pieces from the 1840s.

In 1849, the Dodworth family joined the Philharmonic Society of New York, which later founded the New York Philharmonic. Dodworth’s band was largely inspirational to the set-up of the Philharmonic, due to the band’s well-established success among the population in the city. The first concert held by the Philharmonic, of which Harvey Dodworth was in attendance, was held with an audience of six hundred and cost a hefty eighty-five cents per ticket (today, a gala ticket is worth up to $600). The concert featured both operatic and orchestral selections, where the musicians stood for the duration of the concert, with the exception of the cellos.

**Madison Square Garden**

In 1879 plans were made to open Madison Square Garden as a music garden, to accommodate a new 123-piece orchestra under Harvey Dodworth’s leadership. William H. Vanderbilt leased the hall itself, overseeing the renovation of the hall to become more Italianate in style. In order to expose the public to new forms of “high art,” Dodworth reduced the entrance fee to twenty-five cents (currently, a concert can be up to $400 a ticket). Previously, the hall had been used for walking matches, or foot races, but Dodworth envisioned a place for brass bands from all over the country to play for New York audiences. Dodworth rented the hall from May 31 to September 30, 1879, for $1,000 per month. By October of 1879 the hall was meant to change hands. The next tenant, Edward Payson Weston, was rumored to be planning walking matches in the gardens, violating Dodworth’s spoken contract about the intended uses of the hall. This scandal subsided when Dodworth allowed the match to occur, and a six-day walking match successfully transpired. Charles Rowell won the match, and received the Astley Belt from Edward Weston himself.

**The Civil War**

By the dawn of the Civil War, Dodworth’s brass band was immensely popular. Though still one of the very few brass bands in existence, it quickly became
a part of the military band of the 71st regiment of the New York State Militia. The Dodworth family is said to have trained over 500 instrumentalists and bandleaders for the Union in its various music schools during the Civil War. The drum itself entered into the 71st’s band under Colonel Abram Vosburgh, whose command was placed under Brigadier Colonel Ambrose Burnside for the First and Second Battles at Bull Run (Manassas). The nation thought highly of the 71st, which lost 63 men at First Bull Run, despite the need to retreat.

During the retreat, the drum was abandoned on the battlefield until the drummer boy, T. Helfenritter, returned to retrieve the drum from Cobb Run. After Helfenritter repaired the drum in 1894, it is said to have been present at the Ford Theater, on the night of Lincoln’s assassination.

**Celebrity**

According to Olean Dodworth, Harvey Dodworth’s son, the drum was used at the inaugurations of Presidents Martin Van Buren, William Henry Harrison, James K. Polk, Zachary Taylor, James K. Buchanan, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, James A. Garfield, Grover Cleveland, and Benjamin Harrison. By the late 1890s Olean B. Dodworth oversaw the use of the drum in various state occasions, in order to preserve the memory of the Dodworth Cornet Band.

The drum was last played at the funeral of Harvey Dodworth in 1891. The drum changed hands from Olean Dodworth to E. W. Eldridge in 1899, then was donated to the Chicago Historical Society, and entered into the New York Historical Society’s collection in 1950.

The drum, though a simple-looking object, represents the founding of major institutions we consider fundamental parts of New York’s culture: music played in Central Park, Madison Square Garden, and the Ford Theater.
Works Cited:


Title: *Bulls and Bears in the Market*

Maker: William Holbrook Beard

Date Created: 1879

Presented by Mahmudur Rahman
The painting *Bulls and Bears in the Market* showcases William Holbrook Beard’s signature motif: animal symbolism to satirize human nature. Although he was initially a portrait painter, Beard gained fame after he was inducted as an Associate of the National Academy of Design, and began to incorporate animals into his paintings. During the Gilded Age, the Menagerie became a metaphor for the New York Stock Exchange; it became a place where savage aggression, chaos, and “capitalism red in tooth and claw” dominated the floor. The primitive struggle for survival on the floor of the exchange juxtaposed the civility and culture which 19th century New York City had come to be known for. With countless lives and fortunes on the line, the stakes and volatility of the stock market caused people to overcome any sense of decorum, and release their bestial nature when trading. The animal spirit in the market roared well past the Civil War and climaxed with the Panic of 1873, an event which may have inspired Beard. In the painting *Bulls and Bears in the Market*, Beard vividly depicts the ferocity of Wall Street investors by clashing the two major types of traders, “Bulls” and “Bears”, with the New York Stock Exchange in the backdrop. Bulls traditionally symbolize aggressive and optimistic investors, while bears symbolize low-risk, pessimistic investors. Capturing Wall Street through animal symbolism is Beard’s subtle reminder that, beneath New York’s glorification of culture and refinement lays raw animalistic fervor upon which the financial market is founded, and continues to prosper from.

Business is New York, as New York is Business. The Wall Street Bull defines New York City as much as, if not more than, the Statue of Liberty does. New York has always been a commercial center, an ideal port city for trade. Naturally, as the economy in New York evolved, it became home to the premier American financial institutions. After the formal induction of the New York Stock Exchange in 1817, New York City became a permanent fixture in the national economy. Wall Street’s influence was not limited to finance; just about every large-scale undertaking in the United States can be traced back to trading on Wall Street. The investors of New York played an immense role in fueling the building of the United States’ Industrial economy. New York was quick to industrialize, and other northern states followed suit with the aid of venture capitalists facilitated through the Stock Exchange. New
York’s economy thrived during the Civil War due to the increased manufacturing, however the joy of prosper would be cut short. As Reconstruction progressed and the old order of the United States melted away, havoc wreaked the market.

Wall Street slowly fell into the grip of notorious New York business tycoons including Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jay Gould, and Daniel Drew. Railroads had cost an exorbitant $36000 per mile of track; therefore it became imperative that the enterprise involve trading of public securities to raise capital. After the Civil War, the South was viewed to be full of untapped potential for industry. Rampant speculation plagued the market, as railroad moguls seized the opportunity to dangerously overextend themselves by quadrupling railway production from 1700 miles in 1869 to 7200 miles in 1872. The lack of government regulation left the market vulnerable to such an excessive growth in such a risky sector of the economy, and investors in New York and in Europe bought the unpredictable railroad bonds in frenzy. Catastrophically the invisible hand was not able to compensate for a folly of this size.

Events in Europe, specifically the abandonment of the silver backed currency in Germany, led to the United States demonetizing silver. This had unforeseen consequences such as a reduction in currency out in circulation, which resulted in a credit crunch. Ultimately, the combination of high levels of unchecked building with low or nonexistent returns on investments meant banks could not resolve their balance because of the stringent supply of money. The failure of a major New York Bank Jay Cooke & Company on September 18 1873, due to millions in railway bonds being undervalued, began a 4 year crash which nearly crippled the American financial system. Panic struck the exchange as eighteen other New York Banks fell like dominoes, and over the next forty days over five thousand other companies defaulted. For the first time in history on September 20 1873, the stock exchange closed for ten days.

The prevailing notion was that, decisions made on Wall Street did not affect the financial condition of the nation, but soon enough the entire nation began to feel the consequences of the panic. While mayhem progressed in the financial district, the robber barons continued to shear the sheep of New York City. Using unethical
business practices, the guile continued to flourish at the public’s expense. New York City entered a slump, with 25% of the workforce unemployed at the peak of the panic. The disparity between the rich and poor continued to widen as railroad companies shut down and farmers and factories could not get food and goods across the rails. Unemployment across the nation reached 14%. Unrest among the working people of New York City continued to escalate, and an increasing number of strikes occurred, which lead to a violent brawl between the police and unemployed demonstrators at Tompkins Square Park in 1874.

Government intervention finally caused a change for the better. Instead of printing valueless money that would only spur inflation, the Passage of the Specie Resumption Act of 1875 produced a stable dollar by redeeming currency in gold. After 1879, the market in New York as well as the rest of the nation was finally on the rise. Order was finally reestablished, as lessons had been learned from the exploitation that occurred without boundaries in business. The New York Stock Exchange saw major reform with the implementation of government oversight and cleansing of corrupt politicians.

New York City is the greatest city in the world because what happens here does not stop here. Whatever happens in New York has a ripple effect on the rest of the nation. Wall Street epitomizes this phenomenon and the Panic of 1873 attests to New York’s importance in the national and global arena. Wall Street during the nineteenth century exemplified unfettered capitalism and greed that ruled above all else. Millions of people’s livelihoods were and still are dependent on the outcome of the stock exchange, for better or for worse. Since New York City’s importance is attributed to its responsibility for the fiscal balance of the world, William Beard’s *Bulls and Bears in the Market* is significant in the history of New York. His painting highlights the stock exchange and the culture that has developed around its existence. Portraying the Gilded Age of New York City finance, the painting marks a lesser known yet momentous time in New York City.
Works Cited:


Title: Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

Artist: William Kelly

Date created: 1886

Presented by Nawal Arjini
New York’s long history as the center of American culture arguably starts with books. The city’s impressive literary tradition begins with Washington Irving, Edith Wharton, Edgar Allan Poe, and Herman Melville. It continues to incorporate a list of almost countless names: F. Scott Fitzgerald, Langston Hughes, Truman Capote, James Baldwin, E.B. White, the Beats, Toni Morrison, even Dr. Seuss. The city has been home to almost all the great names in American literature and several international authors as well. But the one work that perhaps played the largest role in transforming New York from an economic hub into a cultural capital is Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass*, self-published on Brooklyn’s Fulton Street in 1855.

Whitman was born in Long Island in 1919, and his family moved to Brooklyn when he was four. Living in the city had a profound influence on him, which was reflected in his works as well as in his philosophy. Many of his poems, such as “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” (1956) and “Mannahatta” (1860), speak explicitly about his daily experience living in New York. Others, like his most famous poem, “Song of Myself” (1855), reflect why Whitman loved city life: he felt that New York brought people together in an almost spiritual sense. As he wrote in “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” (at that time, the Brooklyn Bridge had not yet been built, and commuters had to take a ferry across the East River), Whitman believed the citizens of New York were united under one “soul”. In an 1871 essay entitled “Democratic Vistas,” he wrote that “the assemblages of citizens in their groups, conversations, trades… these, I say, completely satisfy my senses of power, fullness, motion, and give me… a continued exaltation and absolute fulfillment.”

Whitman represented a transition from the naturalism of the Transcendentalists, including his friend and mentor Ralph Waldo Emerson, towards a new, more realist style. In the same essay, he wrote that “not Nature alone is great… but in the artificial, the work of man too is equally great -- in this profusion of teeming humanity, -- in these…hurrying, feverish, electric crowds of men.” The Transcendentalists, on the other hand, were active in the years before “Leaves of Grass” was published, and spent years secluded in the New England wilderness in order to achieve enlightenment. However, Whitman did share with them an interest in national politics. Whitman, along with many other literary figures in New York,
including Herman Melville, was passionately anti-slavery. (Melville and Whitman lived within two miles of each other, had mutual friends, liked to walk around the same neighborhoods and sit in Battery Park to watch the ships in the harbor, and yet they never met.) “The free city!” Whitman exclaimed in “Mannahatta”: “No slave! no owners of slaves!”

Of course, Melville and Whitman were not the only prominent authors in New York in the nineteenth century. Washington Irving could be credited for starting the New York literary culture; Edith Wharton not only lived in New York but made the city’s high society the focus of her books. Edgar Allan Poe, who once lived in a farm on the Upper West Side, spent many years trying to find writing work amid the Panic of 1837 and the non-existent copyright laws, which meant that plagiarized British books were cheaper to publish than original American ones. Mark Twain, who arrived in New York when he was seventeen, loved it at first and then slowly became more ambivalent towards the city, though he spent a large portion of his life there. As time went by and New York became a cultural hub in other respects (music, theater, dance, film, and art flourished), more and more writers came in droves to the city.

But Walt Whitman stands preeminent among these men and women as the one person who brought New York culture to global attention because he managed to forge an identity for the city. At the time “Leaves of Grass” was published, America was facing crises on multiple fronts. Less than a century after independence, it remained culturally indebted to Britain. The expansionist forces were pushing for stretching the borders of America from coast to coast, without strategy or restraint; anti-expansionist forces were responding by fighting change and trying to preserve America exactly as it was. The North and South were already pulling apart, and the issue of slavery was dividing people even more locally. New York itself was receiving thousands of immigrants from across the world every day. When Whitman published “Song of Myself,” he was writing not only about the beauty of diversity but also celebrating a common human experience: the search for identity. Whitman gave New York and America its answer, and he continues to inspire poets, writers, and New Yorkers today.
Works Cited:


Title: Ichabod Cane & The Headless Horseman
Maker: John Rogers
Date Created: December 1887

Presented by Xavier Chandler
"Ichabod Crane & The Headless Horseman" is a sculpture by 19th century artist John Rogers. It was made in 1820 and was acquired by the New-York Historical Society Museum in 1936. The story behind this sculpture was from a famous book called "Legend Of Sleepy Hollow" by Washington Irving. It takes place in the town of Sleepy Hollow where Ichabod Crane was living. In the story, he was a very nervous and timid teacher who fell in love with a wealthy farmer's daughter named Katrina Van Tassel. But Crane was in competition with Abraham "Broms Bones" Van Brunt. Crane was invited to a party by Katrina in an attempt to win her heart but was turned down that night. As Crane was heading home he ran into a ghostly figure. The sculpture depicts Ichabod Crane coming into contact with a man on a horse but with no head. The only thing the man has is a pumpkin in his hands. John Rogers sculpted the mane and tail of the horse to show the speed of the horseman. He also depicts Crane’s face as terrified of the sudden appearance of the horseman. Looking closely at the horseman you can slightly see a man’s face peering out from under the cloak. In Irving’s story he leaves a hint that Broms Bones was the horseman, but Rogers clearly depicts that he was the horseman. John Rogers was an artist in the 19th Century and sculpted many important events, popular novel, poems, stories that he had heard, and everyday life. Rogers made a living by creating sculptures for $15.00 a piece which was very affordable for the middle class and the wealthy. Unlike most sculptors, who typically used bronze and marble, Rogers made his artworks out of affordable plaster which was also much easier to use than bronze or marble. With affordable artworks Rogers’s fame quickly spread over the country; many families have huge collections of Rogers’s works. His sculpture "Ichabod Crane & The Headless Horseman" was created in 1887 after Civil War.

Washington Irving was a well-known American author in the 19th Century and has written other well-known stories such as "Rip Van Winkle". Washington Irving was a historian and biographer of the early 19th Century. His historical works include the biography of George Washington, Muhammad, and Oliver Goldsmith. In late 1809, Irving completed his first major book, *A History Of New-York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty*. It was a view on self-important local history and contemporary politics. After his increase in popularity
due to *A History Of New York*, he became the editor of the Analetic Magazine and wrote more biographies. Irving later on moved to England to pursue his writing career and there he wrote "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend Of Sleepy Hollow".

 Literary interpreters give inspiration for great artworks. Artists have different views on how they perceive certain objects or morals. Alice in Wonderland by Charles Dodgson was a children's bedtime story. Since it was a bedtime story it had witty, funny characters that had adult features. The caterpillar that Alice meets while sitting on a giant mushroom is smoking hookah, which most children do not do. Years later an artist named Jose de Creeft re-created that scene with a sculpture and placed it in Central Park. The sculpture shows Alice sitting down enjoying time with a cat and meeting the White Rabbit. What Dodgson had described as a moment where a child deals with a mature encounter, Creeft saw as a child who seems lost but is enjoying the moment.

 Although Rogers was a sculptor and Irving a writer, these two had an innate connection on how they interpreted art. Irving describes the scene of the headless horseman and Ichabod as a horrifying event. Irving describes Crane as a highly superstitious person. Irving also points out that Ichabod is too terrified to ride his horse and falls off his horse. Rogers does show fear in Ichabod's face in the sculpture but he also shows that he has control of the horse at all times. It is self- evident that different artists have different views on certain topics, but they still get the story across to the viewer.
Title: Section of Transatlantic Telegraph Cable  
Maker: Siemens Brothers & Co.  
Date Created: 1887  

Presented by Seowon Yu
The influence of globalization is closely tied to the evolution of communications technology. In the early 19th century, the creation and dissemination of the Morse electric telegraph was a significant step towards global integration. Largely replacing paper mail, which took weeks or months to travel long distances, the telegraph allowed nearly instant communication between distant locations. Communication and commerce were changed completely. The creation of the first Transatlantic Cable, connecting New York City to London, further revolutionized trade by linking continents separated by oceans.

Telegraphy is the long distance transmission of messages without the exchange of physical receptacles for information. Begun in Europe as early as 1792, it was made commercially viable in 1837 by Samuel F. B. Morse and Alfred Vail, who created the Morse Code alphabet. By 1843, Congress funded the creation of a line from Washington D.C. to Baltimore. One year later on May 24, Morse transmitted the first American telegraph message, bearing the words: “What hath God wrought”. Beginning with the creation of the Magnetic Telegraph Company, the telegraph began to spread rapidly in the United States. By the time of the Civil War, plans for a transcontinental telegraph cable were in place. Authorized by the Telegraph Act of 1860, awarded to Hiram Sibley, the Transcontinental Telegraph became the only nearly instantaneous method of communication in the 1860s. Two days after its implementation, the Pony Express ceased operation.

The creation of the telegraph allowed business and politics to transcend geographic constrictions. Previously limited information could now be transmitted without becoming outdated by the time of its arrival. Many predicted that the telegraph would break down national barriers and rivalries, promote world peace, and outdate newspapers. Morse himself declared in a letter that the telegraph “must become an instrument of immense power, to be wielded for good or evil”. As he predicted, the telegraph stirred massive changes, especially within the realm of business. With the quick communication allowed by the telegraph, markets grew larger and more efficient. Smaller firms integrated vertically, serving multiple economic functions. Massive companies, such as Standard Oil, could dominate huge
portions of the market only because the telegraph allowed timely communication to subsidiaries. Given the impact this invention had in the United States, further expansion to international waters was inevitable.

The Transatlantic Telegraph Cable had the same impact as its continental cousin, but on an international scale. Stretching from New York City to London, it reduced message delivery time from 10 days to a few minutes. However, like most ambitious projects, the Transatlantic Cable suffered from many difficulties. Begun in 1855, weather conditions, inadequate funding, and unsuitable equipment prevented the project’s completion until its third attempt in 1858. Once it was completed, unforeseen complications with the material of the cable resulted in transmission problems that delayed messages for hours. A few weeks after it was installed, the cable stopped functioning, creating huge controversy. Messages were at first difficult to send, receive, or decipher, resulting in increased voltages sent through the wire until it failed completely. Despite these costly setbacks, repeated attempts were made to repair and install improved communications lines. Eventually, by 1866, the wire could transmit data at reasonable speeds. Further improvements such as the Duplex and Quadruplex, which allowed two and four simultaneous messages respectively, made the cable more effective with time.

The Transatlantic Telegraph Cable and other transoceanic cables served many diplomatic, military, and commercial purposes. Communications capacity was vital in all these fields, giving the telegraph an important role, and its owner a strategic advantage. Commercially, ship owners could give ship captains information on pricing en route. The modern stock exchange began with the creation of the telegraph; Thomas Edison’s stock ticker was a device connected to telegraph lines. Coordinating between large, widespread markets became possible. In a diplomatic role, timely communication helped dispel the confusion caused by month long delays between dispatches. Instances such as the long wait between the American Declaration of Independence and Britain receiving word of it would no longer occur. The military applications of the telegraph are obvious; rapid reconnaissance and intelligence gathering increased the pace and violence of warfare. Accordingly, telegraph cables became key targets in battle; Britain’s first
actions with the outbreak of World War I was to cut Germany’s telegraph cables to America. As the capital of a global empire, London became telecommunications center of the world. In time, New York City capitalized on the technology as well, beginning the metropolis’s journey towards global influence.

The ability to communicate brings the world together; at the turn of the 19th century, the telegraph was a major catalyst towards global integration. Much like today’s Internet, the telegraph broke down geographic barriers and misconceptions born of ignorance by allowing previously isolated people to interact with one another. Many historians consider the telegraph to have initiated the fluid, fast paced innovation and change characteristic of the 21st century. The modern face of New York City, and the far-reaching impact its media and financial institutions have, can largely be attributed to the telegraph’s invention. The Transatlantic Telegraph Cable in the New York Historical Society’s collection represents a key moment in the city’s development towards what it is today.
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Title: Ice Cream Dish
Maker: Tiffany & Co.
Date Created: 1877-1878

Presented by Sinika Martin-Gonzalez
This sterling silver ice cream dish comes from the famous “Dinner and Dessert Service for Twenty-Four Persons”. The set is a 1, 250 piece set that John William Mackay commissioned from Tiffany & Co. for his wife Marie Louise Mackay née Hungerford out of silver brought straight out of the Comstock Lode, a mine within the larger Kentucky Mine. The silver service was the most opulent and extravagant of its time and embodied the excess of the Gilded Age.

In Colonial America, ice cream was a luxury available only to the very wealthy year-round, however, the poor could only afford it in the winter. By the second half of the eighteenth century, ice cream was available to anyone thanks to the manufacturing work of Jacob Fussell, New York City’s first major wholesaler. After the Civil War, the silver industry expanded as a response to the ice cream fad. Companies like Tiffany & Co. began producing specialized serving dishes such as the Mackay one and its pair, along with special forks, knives, and spoons designed for eating ice cream. Mr. Mackay was not the stereotypical owner of this dish. He came from a very modest background. His family had come to New York City as penniless Irish immigrants.

German and Irish were the two predominant immigrant groups that came to America both immediately before and after the Civil War. The Irish were often discriminated against by nativists, who felt threatened by a wave of immigrants that were of a different religion and, in their eyes, less moral. Irish immigrants also tended to be poorer, coming to United States after serious crop failures like the potato famine. Irish immigrants, usually born as farmers in Ireland, were almost completely unskilled laborers, which meant that they had very little to bring to America. Germans were a little better off as they tended to have more education and knew some form of skilled labor. Germans also settled in the Midwest and westernmost East, areas that were less populous as well as less settled, while the Irish crowded into eastern cities like New York and Boston. These immigrants would generally have to accept that their lives would not improve much and that they would not move up the social strata.

John William Mackay exemplified the American dream of rags-to-riches. He was born in Dublin, Ireland on November 28th, 1831. He became an Irish immigrant
when his parents brought him to New York City in 1840. There he initially worked in a shipyard, then in 1851; he went out to California and worked in the placer-gold mines in Sierra County. In 1860, he went to Virginia City, Nevada, where he lost all he had made in California and worked his way up from miner to superintendent and then partner in the Kentucky Mine. In 1869 Mackay formed a business partnership with three other Irishmen: James Graham Fair, James C. Flood and William S. O’Brien. The three men named their business the Consolidated Virginia Mining Company. Located in Virginia City, the company dealt in silver stocks and operation of mines on the Comstock Lode. As a result of their dealings on the Comstock Lode, the four men became multimillionaires and were known as the “Silver Kings” of the Comstock. John William Mackay married the widowed Marie Louise Bryant in 1867. Marie Louise Antoinette Hungerford was born in 1843 in New York City to poor immigrant parents who moved to Downieville, California. At age fifteen, she married young Dr. Edmond Bryant and the two moved to Virginia City, drawn by the magnetic Comstock Lode. By 1863, Dr. Bryant was hopelessly addicted to morphine, forcing his family into abject poverty. Her husband’s inability to work forced Marie Louise Bryant to take in sewing and teach at the Daughters of Charity School until as a widow, she met and married John Mackay. Their first son, John William Mackay, named for his father, was born in 1870. Their second son, Clarence Hungerford Mackay, was born in 1874 in San Francisco, where the family had moved. In 1876 the Mackays moved to New York, but the nouveau riche, Irish-Catholic Marie was snubbed by the elite of New York, so John agreed to have her move the whole family to Paris, where Marie entertained in lavish style. John ordered a complete silver service for Marie from Tiffany & Co., made of silver brought directly up from the Comstock Lode. The silver service took two years to make and the work of more than two hundred individuals. In 1883, Marie moved her family to London in order for them to get a British education and John met with J. Gordon Bennett Jr. and decided to go into the trans-Atlantic cable business, creating the Commercial Cable Company. The following year, the first two trans-Atlantic cables were laid. In 1886, John laid the land lines for the Postal Telegraph-Commercial Cable Company. In 1895, John W., the Mackays’ eldest, died in a horse-racing accident, which prompted
Mackay to bring Clarence home to New York to teach him about the cable-telegraph business. John Mackay died in London on a business trip on July 20th, 1902 of heart failure and was buried in Green-Wood Cemetery in Kings County, Brooklyn. Marie did not return to New York until 1920, after spending forty-four years abroad, and took up residence at Harbor Hill. She died in 1928 at age 85 at Harbor Hill.

During John Mackay's lifetime, he was well-known for his philanthropy. He worked with orphanages, the Roman Catholic Church and dealt with his employees fairly. After Mackay's death, his son and widow continued his legacy by providing the University of Nevada with the money necessary to create the Mackay School of Mines. A statue of him by Gurzon Borglum stands in front of the building on campus. The Mackay Trophy was created in honor of John William Mackay for the "most meritorious flight of the year" because of his advances in trans-Atlantic communication.

The Mackay silver service is representational of the fortunes and history of the Mackay family and the Gilded Age they lived in. As the Mackay silver service began as a piece of silver ore in the ground, the Mackay family began as dirt-poor immigrants. After being shaped and polished by Tiffany & Co., the ore became a brilliant silver service, stirring the jealousy of many, including many other high society families. Likewise, the Mackay family became shaped and polished by their fortunes and inspired the envy of countless others.
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Title: How The Other Half Lives
Maker: Jacob Riis
Date Created: 1890

Presented by Olivia Neubert
Published in 1890, Jacob Riis’s book "How the Other Half Lives" consists of graphic descriptions, sketches, statistics, and photographs that illustrate the lives of those in poverty during a period known for its luxury, called the Gilded Age. "How the Other Half Lives" served as a book of journalism and social criticism with the target audience being the upper and middle classes. Experiencing similar situations (as an impoverished immigrant) to his subjects, Jacob Riis used his photography talent to raise awareness of life in the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Riis changed the lives of New York City's poor by exposing how they were forced to live through his popular book, "How The Other Half Lives".

Riis, an immigrant himself came to America expecting to achieve the American Dream, as many others did. Born into a large, struggling family in Denmark, Jacob Riis tried to make a living for himself in different fields, but his father always encouraged him to read, write, and have an education. In 1870, at 21, the young hopeful immigrated to New York City and fell into poverty. Using his knowledge, Riis eventually landed a job as a police report journalist. His finances improved and he bought himself a camera with new advances in technology. With his new tool and backbone in journalism, Jacob Riis set out to bring the social injustice of tenement housing to light.

Jacob Riis was strategic with his technique to allow his photographs to have the greatest impact possible on his target audience. His subjects, who were mostly immigrants, lived in crowded tenement homes in severe poverty. Riis purposely took pictures of his subjects in scenes that socially and physically contrasted with the well-off New Yorkers. The neighborhoods were crime ridden and dirty, the homes were miniature factories, and the families gathered in close quarters and the children wandered the streets alone. Jacob Riis also made a point to capture the setting. Though this was effective in accomplishing what it was intended for, showing the terrible living conditions; it dehumanized the people by missing the emotions on their faces. Despite this, some of Jacob Riis’s most famous pictures showed the environment instead of the distress that people felt. The photograph "5 Cents A Spot", for example, is widely known because of the crowded conditions of a tenement home in which a spot on the floor would cost five cents. Another famous image is of "Bandit's Roost", an alleyway in an area known as "The Bend". This picture shows the filth in the streets and the clear unavailability of fresh air and a healthy environment. Riis’s strategies allowed his photographs to have such a great impact on the peoples of New York City.

Jacob Riis’s role as a journalist and photographer quickly changed to a social reformer. His work influenced many, even catching the eye of President Roosevelt. "How
the Other Half Lives" brought tenement housing issues to the Federal Government. Under Roosevelt, in order to help tenement residents have a healthier lifestyle, The Tenement House Act was passed in 1901. This act increased sanitation, prevented diseases, and modified safety codes. Due to this act, many tenements that were previously inhumane became more livable. "How the Other Half Lives" was most popular with and had the greatest impact on the middle class. Their charity work bettered the lives of many tenement residents. The most significant of these improvements was through the founding of Settlement Houses. These were homes open to the impoverished children of the Lower East Side. They served as a sanctuary and an escape from the danger and crime of the streets. "How the Other Half Lives" pulled poverty in the Lower East Side into the light, improving the lives of many.

"How The Other Half Lives" was one of the most significant books of its time an today, gives a window into life in the Lower East Side during the turn of the century. This book with its famous images influences social reform both through New York Citizens and the Federal Government. Jacob Riis's personal experiences as an immigrant, journalist, and talented photographer made him the perfect candidate to put together such an influential book.

Work Cited:


Title: Gavel

Owned By: Clarence Lexow

Date Created: 1894

Presented by Marcia White
New York City’s Finest

In the United States Court System, the slamming of a judge’s gavel is the sound of justice being served. Clarence Lexow was given a gavel to represent the justice he brought over New York City during the 1890s, when corruption consumed the New York City Police Department. He assembled a team of investigators called the Lexow Committee to dispose of the corrupt police officers in the NYPD. This committee investigated Tammany Hall and the police who were extorting bribes from operators of gambling and prostitution houses. The Lexow Committee’s interacted with several other investigation teams and special private investigators to bring down Tammany Hall. However, Clarence Lexow did not have the authority to sentence anyone or have the chance to slam his gavel in court. Clarence Lexow was a former New York Senator who was trying to fix New York's justice system. Lexow brought justice to New York City by ridding the city of those who were corrupt. In the end Lexow slammed his gavel over the New York City’s Finest, the NYPD.

During the 1890s political corruption was on the rise and making its home in New York City. Political corruption started with Tammany Hall, which was used by political officials to control New York politics. Political officials were not the only ones who were capitalizing on the idea of using Tammany Hall for their benefit. The New York City Police Department had started to dabble in illegal activities of the city such as gambling and prostitution rings. The NYPD's job description is to protect and serve the citizens of New York City, not try to make a profit out of the illegal dealings in the city. Clarence Lexow was serious about cleaning up the streets of New York City and its police department. He introduced a bi-partisan police bill which calls for two different political parties to work together to meet a mutual goal through legislation. In time of crisis, the nation will pull together and that is exactly what happened with the Lexow Committee. Lexow’s Committee comprised of five republicans, including him and two democrats and consisted of investigators from
Westchester County, Manhattan, Brooklyn, Wayne County, Broome County and Niagara County.

Although Clarence Lexow did form a committee of investigators, he also used Dr. Charles Parkhurst’s findings to help him convict police officers. Originally, Parkhurst was President of the New York Society for the Prevention of Crime which made sure that the methods of the city police department were legal. Parkhurst brought new information to the Lexow Committee that helped convict several police officers. Dr. Charles Parkhurst formed his own team, the City Vigilance League, which recruited ordinary citizens to act as spies in their own neighborhoods. For example, the spies would carry colored maps which told the name of the illegal house, who owned it, and that homeowner’s leases. Lexow also worked with Superintendent Byrnes, who took over the Lexow Investigation as the main investigator and was a witness during several trials against corrupt police officials. Superintendent Byrnes reported several times that saloons were not keeping track of the Excise tax on liquor and that they were opened on Sundays, which was against the law in the 1890s. Superintendent Byrnes’ investigation terminated several ward men and precinct detective positions on the force. The combination of zealous investigators, the City Vigilance League and Superintendent was enough to put away several corrupt officials in the NYPD, including officials in higher offices.

After Dr. Parkhurst publically challenged the Lexow Committee to go after higher officials in the NYPD, the Lexow Committee really started to bring down corruption in New York City by going after the captains and sergeants of the NYPD. The Lexow Committee indicted several captains including: Captain William S. Devery, Michael Doherty, William W. McLaughlin, Michael J. Murphy, James K. Price, Jacob Siebert, and John T. Stephenson. Each captain was being accused of either ignoring the corruption in New York City or using illegal activities for their benefit. For example, Captain John T. Stephenson was convicted of accepting a hundred dollars from William F.J. Pickle who was the President of the Retail Liquor Dealers’ Association of the Fifth Ward. Stephenson was sentenced to three years and ordered to pay a thousand dollars. Although other captains were convicted, several captains went to the Court of Appeals and got their conviction repealed. Captain James K.
Price and John J. Donohue both were accused of attempting to extort money from Jared Flagg Jr. who was accused of renting out rooms for illegal activity. Ward men were also convicted for bribery, extortion and perjury such as Ward Man James Burns, Augustus S. Thorne, and policeman Edward G. Glennon.

The most infamous indictments were against Captain William W. Devery and Investigator William McLaughlin. Capt. William Devery was indicted for bribery and extorting a hundred dollars from Francis W. Seagrist Jr. Devery promised that he would turn a blind eye while Seagrist demolished a group of buildings at Broadway and Pine Street. Unfortunately Devery was tried and acquitted. It was reported that some neighbors complained to policeman Edward Glennon about the sawdust from the demolished buildings but did not report it to Devery. Unlike Devery, McLaughlin was tried and convicted for accepting fifty dollars from Francis W. Seagrist Jr. for turning a blind eye while Seagrist demolished buildings. McLaughlin was also tried for accepting seventy-five dollars from Thomas E. Trippler and Charles H. Southard, accepting fifty dollars from Fredrick H. Hausling, and accepting two hundred fifty dollars from Walter H. Harrison.

The New York Police Department’s mission is to protect New York’s citizens from crime and keep the city from being corrupt. Instead New York’s finest in the 1890s was participating in criminal activity and covering up illegal activity throughout New York City. This part in history shows New Yorkers that no one is above the law, including those who carry out the law. Even those who have the authority to arrest and slam their gavels in court can be brought up for questioning. America has a check and balance system that allows us to purge corruption from our cities and our government. Clarence Lexow understood that no one was above the law and used that belief to indict several corrupt officials in the NYPD. Lexow slammed his gavel and casted judgment over the corruption in New York City.
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Title: Wisteria Lamp

Maker: Clara Driscoll

Date Created: 1900

Presented by Malgorzata Banach
Clara Driscoll was a name most people did not know in the early 20th century. A worker for Louis C. Tiffany Studios, she was deemed as just a simple worker for the company that produced magnificent works of art. At that time society would not accept that a woman could be the mastermind behind such beauties. Through letters to her family, which became publicized later on, light was shed on Driscoll, and the talent she produced, and a woman’s full potential was exposed.

Tiffany studios originated in Corona, Queens, New York in 1885. Originally just a glass maker, the company expanded to produce Tiffany lamps. One of the most famous of the Tiffany lamps is referred to as the Wisteria Lamp. Made up of thousands of individual glass pieces designed by Driscoll and the “Tiffany girls” (a group of women that assisted Clara in the process), this lamp was originally sold for $250.00 at an auction, but now is considered an expensive piece that so few people could actually own.

It was thought that Emarel Freschel was the original creator, as well as Louis Comfort Tiffany, owner of Tiffany Studios. This is due in part of the Progressive Era—the time period in which the production of Tiffany lamps took place. During this time, women were not regarded as makers of such items that received a great deal of credit, and popularity. In the studio alone, gender clashes were present, as women were only given the responsibility of cutting and selecting glass, while men were the ones who designed and manufactured the lamps with geometric comparison. To further sway the public from knowing the truth, Louis Comfort Tiffany never disclosed the names of his designers, as he wanted the attention to be focused on him, not the real truth. This correlates to the Progressive Era as corruption, lies, and secrets were present in businesses, and the government did not do anything to calm, and put down this movement. Due to this, Tiffany was never required to reveal who was truly behind the lamps. Originally just a glass maker, the company expanded to produce Tiffany lamps.

In the early 20th century, the middle class was becoming increasingly wealthy. As a result, upper middle class and middle class women took the time to reform their lives. They wanted to achieve more rights for women, so that they
could finally be given the rights they deserved. These women, who included Ida Tarbell, pushed for an amendment to be added to the Constitution, but their efforts were further delayed by the start of World War I. Clara Driscoll, continued to design the lamps, but never received the proper credit for it. She desperately attempted to get a woman’s full potential brought to light, and as result, sacrificed a great deal of her personal life in the process. The Progressive Era in which all of this occurred began in 1901, when the Gilded Age came to a halt. This new time period was decorated by a number of movements. Even with evident clashes between the sexes, Tiffany studios presented some compassion as the men’s union attempted to eliminate women out of the workforce, but Tiffany refused to comply. Clara Driscoll finally saw potential to achieve her goal. A specific number of letters were sent by Driscoll to her mother that revealed that she was indeed the mastermind behind the lamps. After the Progressive Era left behind its monumental woman’s rights movement, Driscoll won the attention of many lamp attracters, and received the credit she deserved.

While Clara Driscoll worked in the Queens factory making Tiffany lamps that attracted many, she never was regarded as the maker. She was yet just another woman working on a small part of a large project. The truth was concealed due to in part of the Progressive Era characteristics that included corruption in the businesses, in which the government did nothing to prevent, and stop, as well as no significant rights for women. Tiffany Studios never included Driscoll in the press as a creator, and the media never found out about her. As time went by, and the Progressive Era came, Driscoll’s secret was exposed via letters she sent to her mother. They revealed that she was actually the creator of the lamps. Eventually, Clara Driscoll was able to receive the credit she deserved for her magnificent works of art.
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Title: Subway Controller Handle

Maker: Tiffany & Co.

Date created: 1904

Presented by Laura Mosco
The New York Subway Interborough Rapid Transport System, once “scoffed at as an impossibility”¹ for New York, was completed in 1904; and on October 27th of that year the city came together at City Hall in celebration. It was at these opening ceremonies that Mayor George B. McClellan was presented with a Tiffany & Co. subway controller handle. Commissioned by August Belmont, financier of the subway project, the controller would be used by the Mayor to drive the first Rapid Transport train from City Hall Station to 103rd Street. Made of silver, ebony and steel this sturdy instrument is a remnant of the celebration of that inaugural day and representative of the long journey and initiative it took to complete the New York subway system.

In New York during the 19th century, transportation consisted of horse-drawn stages, omnibuses, and trolleys, all of which added to the city’s congestion issues. At this time “almost one million people squeezed into an area about two miles square.”² What the city needed was a new method of transportation that would allow people to spread out and would not add to the already cramped streets. Alfred Ely Beach believed he could create a solution. He invented a pneumatic transit tube that ran underneath Broadway between Warren Street and Murray Street. It consisted of a tube, a train car, and a large fan. The fan pushed the train forward with air and moved it back by sucking the air back through the fan. It was efficient, underground, and detached from the busy streets-- a viable solution. However, at this time elevated trains were becoming popular. Although underground transit could better expand the metropolitan area, the political infrastructure at that time inevitably did not support his endeavors. Beach's ambition was not completely in vain, however, he was able to prove that the seemingly impossible feat of constructing a subway in New York City was indeed plausible.

In 1888, eighteen years after Beach opened his pneumatic tube to the public, there was a change in public opinion. A massive blizzard made it evident to the government that New York was in need of underground rapid transit. During the
blizzard’s aftermath, the now mass-transit reliant city goers were left with no functional form of transportation. The elevated trains, the omnibuses, and the trolleys were susceptible to service disruption due to inclement weather conditions. A subway system could have enabled New Yorkers to go on with their daily business. By 1894 Mayor Hewitt proposed a plan to build a subway system. Following the Chamber of Commerce’s approval, the state legislature authorized a Board of Rapid Transit Railroad Commissioners to contract construction with a private firm and to choose a route for the subway.

The project was contracted to the President of the Interborough Rapid Transit Company (IRT), August Belmont Jr. and his chief engineer William Barclay Parsons. The route was difficult to determine because like many new technologies, the subway was met with skepticism. Many people believed that a new underground system would prove detrimental to existing buildings’ foundations. Business owners on Broadway protested that if the subway line ran under their stores it would disrupt how they conducted business, while other property owners believed that the ground in the street was “like a bowl of jelly” and would vibrate causing the buildings around it to collapse. These concerns led to a compromise on the original Broadway route. The route would now start at City Hall, go to 42nd Street along Lafayette Place and Lexington Avenue, take a sharp turn westward and then head north to Harlem. With the route in place construction began in 1900.

Construction proved to be difficult. Streets already had sewer, electric, and telegraph wires buried beneath them. When they dug deeper they were met with the obstacles of solid schist (Manhattan’s bedrock). The company simplified their work with the “cut and cover” technique. Workers dug a one-story trench into the road, laid the track and then covered the trench with a special iron-and-steel roof that could be paved over. It was important to Parsons that the subway be only one flight of stairs below ground; he feared any further would deter commuters. In another attempt to attract business the company hired architects Heins & La Farge to design the 28 stations of the 9.1-mile line. Each station would be decorated with significant mosaics, glowing chandeliers and intricate woodwork. Over 7700
construction workers labored for four years and in 1904 the line was opened to the public.

The subway’s inaugural day, October 27, 1904, was a ceremonial day. Fifteen thousand invited guests rode the train along with August Belmont, William Barclay Parsons, and Mayor McClellan at the Tiffany & Co. controller handle. The mayor was so entranced driving the train that he continues driving past the earlier agreed upon point and only gives up the control to the regular motormen at 103rd Street. All day the general public crowded around subway entrances anticipating the emerging commuters and waiting for 7:00 pm when the subway would be opened to them as well. By the end of the day more than 150,000 people had ridden the new luxurious subway system. The Rapid Transit Subway was a hit! By 1913 the subway would become so popular that new legislature would be passed to enable a subway expansion, and by 1930 the subway system had expanded into the vast system we use today. The New York Historical Society acquired the subway controller handle in 1922 to be preserved as a symbol of the city’s growth and transit history.

Work Cited:


Title: Theodore Roosevelt Toby Jug

Maker: Edward Penfield, Lenox.inc

Date: 1908

Presented by Jack Barton
Prior to 1901, “Corporate America” was one of the most corrupt machines in the world. As both police commissioner and governor of New York, Theodore Roosevelt tried to root out as much political corruption as possible. This urge to cure the American system was what got him placed onto the Republican “Progressive” ticket in the 1900 election.

In the early 20th century New York City was one of the most densely populated places in the country. From 1836 to 1914, more than 30 million European immigrants came to the United States (peaking in 1907 at 1.3 million immigrants in just one year). Beyond being densely populated certain areas of New York were also heavily diversified. Besides the economic strife that each family faced they also had to deal with the pressures of a fading nationality. This battle to maintain nationality led to heightened crime between gangs vying for power. In 1895 when Roosevelt became one of the NYPD Police Commissioners much of his work went into reforming the police department which was largely corrupt at the time. This new crime-fighting force under Roosevelt helped to prevent much of the crime in these areas.

A notorious trust-buster, Roosevelt is often pinned as being anti-big business. However, as the “Presidential Studies Quarterly” explains in “Theodore Roosevelt and Corporate America, 1901-1909” Roosevelt’s intentions were far from anti-big business. His motives for reform were not to destroy the monopoly. He made the CEO look at their social and moral obligations and how they affected their business decisions. In the end, the trust or monopoly was usually destroyed, but it is important to distinguish “anti-business” from “for the people.” In the end, Roosevelt’s actions would allow for increasingly fair working conditions for many people. In addition, Roosevelt worked side-by-side with unions to earn their workers higher pay for fewer hours. In his State of the Union address in 1904, Roosevelt directly addresses unions, saying:

There are in this country some labor unions which have habitually, and other labor unions which have often, been among the most effective agents in working for good citizenship and for uplifting the condition of those whose welfare should be closest to our hearts. But
when any labor union seeks improper ends, or seeks to achieve proper ends by improper means, all good citizens and more especially all honorable public servants must oppose the wrongdoing as resolutely as they would oppose the wrongdoing of any great corporation.

Clearly, the corruption of “Corporate America” proved to be no match for Roosevelt’s hands on approach to problem-solving in America.

Theodore Roosevelt was well known for his love of hunting and taxidermy. His biggest, and last, trip to Africa was in 1909 and lasted until 1910. But prior to his departure in 1909, Edward Penfield and Lenox gifted Roosevelt a Toby Jug designed by Penfield himself. The jug symbolized the finalization of this trip, and the role it played in furthering America in the early 20th century. When he departed on March 23, 1909, the crowd that gathered was “probably the greatest send-off ever given an American citizen.” This sort of event is something that instilled great hope in the American people. One of the reasons that Roosevelt went, besides his love for the sport, was because the trip was sanctioned by the Smithsonian institute to make the journey, according to the Smithsonian Archives. The Smithsonian included a clause, however: any duplicates of animals that they did not need, they would give to other museums. One of such museums is the Natural History Museum in New York City. This clause and Roosevelt’s journey helped to further the cultural scene in New York.

Roosevelt’s work affected not only the population of New York, but also the entire country. When President McKinley died in 1901, Roosevelt assumed the presidency and continued his work on an even larger scale. The country desperately needed an era of change—one which Roosevelt hoped to deliver. Roosevelt became known as a notorious trust-buster which benefitted both “Corporate America” and the impoverished all over America.
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Title: *Flags on 57th Street, Winter 1918*

Artist: Childe Hassam

Date Created: 1918
The United States had gone through the top of its time with the Gilded Age and to the low of its time with World War I. Although the Gilded Age was a time when some Americans were very wealthy, there were a greater number of Americans that faced financial hardship. This time period was especially hard for new immigrants. After the Progressive Era, when the economy was settling down, the United States had made the decision to choose their alliances over their newly formed economy. The residents of the United States showed patriotism when their country entered World War I, and Childe Hassam was one of several artists that was documenting places where the "common people" liked to hang out during this time. Childe Hassam had painted Flags on 57th St which portrayed his reaction of the United States entering World War 1. Hassam used French Impressionism, a style that includes a light palette, loose brushwork and elevated “birds-eye” perspective.

World War I was an intriguing war in history because there was no one, concrete reason to explain why the United States actually joined the War. The Unites States wanted to improve its relationships with its allies so it provided weapons to the nations that were involved in the war. This act created relationships with other countries and improved the ruined economy of the United States of that time. The main reason the United States entered the war was because of unrestricted submarine warfare. This act provoked the United States to enter the War because Germany was being unreasonable.

World War I was really inspiring for Childe Hassam, so much so that he made a series of paintings. The first painting in Flag Series was first painted in 1916, and Hassam called it Forth of July. The Flag Series consisted of 30 paintings. The series was based on the events Hassam was inspired by, one of which was the patriotism that emerged during WWI. As a New Yorker he was proud to live in a place where a country is able to fight for what they believe is right. Even though historians today might argue that WWI was unnecessary, it was a reason of Nationalism in 1918.
Childe Hassam really liked painting places for the common people. When World War I was taking place, Fifth Avenue was known as the "Avenue of the Allies". Throughout Fifth Avenue there were flags of the Allied countries and as well as the American flag. Childe Hassam created the flag series of paintings corresponding to the Patriotism for entering WWI. The flag series was unique because Hassam was using the painting style of French Impressionism. He was using a new technique to express his feelings toward his country. Artists had started using French Impression during the 19th century. French Impression paintings mainly had visible brushed strokes which was relatively new during that time. French Impressionism mainly focused on ordinary people. Hassam Childe was really successful in opening the eyes of people and showing them politics in the eyes of an artist.

Flags on 57th Street recorded a time when allies were important to the United States because it was still on its way to become a super power, so it needed to build relationships with other countries, and the best way to do that was to help Great Britain when it was participating in World War I. The World War also helped the United States bring awareness to the people that war is not really the best solution, because at the end Germany was held responsible for creating the problem. The Treaty of Versailles declared that Germany had to pay for the reparations of the war. Germany had felt that it was not fair and then Hitler raised up to power and thus beginning the new story of the Second World War.

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Howard Thain, *Palais d’Or, New York*, 1928
Luce Center Collection, New-York Historical Society

**Title:** *Palais d’Or*

**Maker:** Howard Thain

**Date Created:** 1928
Presented by Jericho Nesbitt

*Through the Eyes of Thain*

The 1920’s, otherwise known as the Roaring Twenties, was a very luxurious and festive time period for New York City. People began to spend more, drink more, attend events frequently and even indulge in illegal activities. The cause of this increase in the participation of social events and illegal activities was the desire to seem wealthy or, as others would say, “keeping up with the Joneses”. Howard Thain’s painting, *Palais d’Or* illustrates this as well as the effects that the 1920’s had on the economy of New York. Thain’s painting illustrates people enjoying themselves at a large, popular club in New York. By including alcohol and an elegant view of the club in the 1920’s, Thain was able to portray the aspects of New York that made life exciting and lively. The 1920’s made New York a great place to live at the time but because of Prohibition and a wide participation in club activities, the amount of illegal activity in New York rose and people spent most of their time partying and spending money. Thain’s painting illustrates the popularity of alcohol and festivities in order to show what made New York City such a prosperous place in the 1920’s.

Howard Thain was born in 1891 and came to New York from Texas in 1919. He is known for always recording the city and people’s actions. From his paintings, it is evident that he enjoyed painting his view of different parts of the city. He has painted Park Avenue at 42nd Street and Grand Central Station. It is obvious that he enjoys painting places that are full of people and always busy. His painting *Palais d’Or* is exactly that. It illustrates the highly populated nightclub Palais d’Or that was popular and always busy. Through his painting he was able to show how great of a place New York City was due to Prohibition and the popularity of clubs.

Prohibiting alcohol was a leading reason for why crime rose and people spent a majority of time at large parties or clubs. By banning alcohol, the government had limited access to it legally and therefore people looked to extravagant parties or clubs for alcohol, as seen in the painting Palais D’Or. In New York, these parties were everywhere. Although it is safe to assume that these parties were favored because
they were a great source of entertainment, it is even better to say that they were favored because they featured the one thing that was very difficult to get: alcohol.

Alcohol was banned by the 18th Amendment as a result of the Temperance Movement. Although, at first, it seemed that there would only be a ban on beer, it turned out instead that Congress decided that the ban applied to any beverage with more than 0.5% of alcohol. To Americans this meant nearly all alcoholic beverages were illegal. As a result, people found a way around the law by making bathtub gin. In highly populated places like New York, bathtub gin was alcohol that was created in a resident’s bathtub to then be either sold or consumed by the creator. Although it was an easy way to get alcohol, bathtub gin had harmful effects. If a person created their alcohol improperly, it could turn out to be toxic and hazardous. A *New York Times* article published in 1921 shows the Prohibition Commissioner warning people of the dangers of bootleg liquor. He asserted that, “Whisky and Gin made from wood alcohol by bootleggers is practically certain to result in blindness and death.” This presents how unsafe bathtub gin was for people, yet people still made it and sold it in clubs and restaurants. Due to the rise in bathtub gin, the rise in alcohol being at popular clubs was present as seen in Thain’s painting.

Thain's painting also illustrates the popularity of clubs in the 1920’s. Since this was one of residents’ few ways to obtain alcohol, many people started to attend nightclubs more often. One popular nightclub similar to and located near Palais D’or was the Cotton Club. The Cotton Club first opened in 1920 as Club Deluxe. In 1922, under the management of Owney Madden, the club’s name was changed to the Cotton Club. After the club gained much success, it was known as one of the best clubs in Harlem. However it was also well known for being a speakeasy and even closed a few times because it sold alcohol. Very famous musicians played there including Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway and Louis Armstrong. Finally it closed for good in 1940. This is what the nightclub Palais d’Or was like. Thain illustrates the popularity of this club by painting a large amount of people in attendance. Also it is evident that everyone is having a good time because the guests are either dancing or sitting and talking.
It is clear that the 1920’s was a joyful time for people residing in New York City. Although alcohol was banned people were still able to gain access to it. Thain used his view of certain areas in New York as the basis of his paintings. He obviously viewed areas such as Grand Central Station, Park Avenue and Palais d'Or as places full of people and enjoyment. His painting of Palais d'Or consists of alcohol and a highly populated club in order to illustrate to the viewer his vision of New York. By being able to see New York through Thain’s eyes, Thain allows the reader to get a grasp of the enthusiasm people saw in New York throughout the 1920’s.

Works Cited:


Title: Self-Winding Stock Ticker
Maker: T.A. Edison Inc.
Date Created: 1923

Presented by: Tyler Lee
As the American economy expanded in the early twentieth century, the volume of trades on the stock exchange multiplied. Naturally, it became necessary to develop new technology that could keep up with the stock and commodity quotations pouring in from the New York Stock Exchange. A self-winding stock ticker by Western Union subsidiary Gold & Stock could print at a speedy rate of 285 words per minute. Interestingly, the ticker was manufactured in Thomas Edison’s West Orange plant, though he did not participate in its design. George B. Scott and W.P. Phelps designed the prototype and in 1903, J.C. Barclay and Jay R. Page refined it to make it smaller. The Scott-Phelps-Barclay-Page ticker would come to simply be known as Western Union’s self-winding stock ticker. The pedestal upon which it stands reads “QUOTATIONS FURNISHED BY THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH CO. APPLY TO LOCAL MANAGER” in gold lettering.

The first stock ticker, invented in 1867 by Edward Calahan, earned its name from its distinct ticking sound. This revolutionary device showed current market prices in Morse code. Prior to this invention, prices were relayed from atop hills and buildings using flags and telescopes. Messages took thirty minutes to reach Philadelphia from New York. Four years later, Thomas Edison’s Universal stock ticker would be recognized as the most reliable. This established Edison’s reputation with the investors who would fund his future research.

New York City has long been a center of commerce. On March 8, 1817, the New York Stock and Exchange Board was formally established, and would later be known as simply the New York Stock Exchange. After WWI, New York supplanted hard-hit London as the world’s financial leader. In response, the market skyrocketed for much of the Roaring Twenties, a time of great wealth and excess. This was a “bull market” economy, symbolizing aggressively optimistic trading. Many investors believed the stock market to be a “safe bet.” During this time, even middle-class Americans invested substantial sums in the market. To do so, they borrowed heavily from banks. By 1929, two out of every five dollars banks loaned went to stocks. A buying frenzy in March of 1929 continued to propel the market.
However, some feared that after such prolonged prosperity, it would all soon collapse.

It was the self-winding stock tickers that recorded the unprecedented crash that October. It began on Thursday, October 24 and culminated in the devastating Black Tuesday, in which 3 million stocks were sold in the first thirty minutes of trading alone. As a result, the Dow Jones fell over 12%, producing a record volume of 16 million shares. The mechanical tickers fell behind, running four hours later than usual past 7:08 PM. The delay aggravated the violence of liquidation in the market, as traders had to act blindly. Not only did it lead to panicky selling, but in some cases stocks would have been supported if their current prices had been learned of more promptly. Traders put a premium on instant access to detailed statistics to find signals of how the market will sway before the general public learns of them.

By changing symbols for share issues and abbreviating quotations, the Exchange attempted to render the old ticker more efficient, but it still could not keep up. Ironically, a much faster black box machine, printing at 500 words per minute, had been invented a year prior to replace the self-winding ticker. However, it had not yet been proven sufficiently fast and reliable. The black box would not officially be installed until 1930.

At noon on October 24th, Thomas Lamont, senior partner at J.P. Morgan and Co., hosted five of the most powerful bankers in the United States at his offices at 23 Wall Street to pool their resources to stabilize the market. Just as the House of Morgan had rescued the economy after the Crash of 1907, Lamont hoped do the same. The next day, the headline of the *New York Daily Investment News* read “Stock Market Crisis Over.” However, Lamont and his colleagues would find themselves over-committed to a failing market, providing only temporary hope. They could not compete with the loss of confidence in the market and the overwhelming desire to sell.

The day was September 3, 1929 when the Dow Jones had closed at a peak of over 381 points, a stark contrast to the low of 41 points it would hit at the height of the Depression on July 8, 1932. Demand for goods plummeted and new investments
came to a halt. With chaos mounting high, banks sought to collect on loans from investors whose shares were now worthless. Furthermore, many banks had lost depositors’ money in the market as well. The remaining money was quickly withdrawn by depositors and banks failed across the board.

Edward H. Simmons, then-president of the New York Stock Exchange, attributed some of the blame to the public’s inexperience and misconceptions about investing. The public had limited information to base their investments on, and in the aftermath, new laws would be passed requiring full disclosure of financial information. In addition, he blamed overproduction in steel and automobile industries, which led to slowing of production and decline in earnings. The autumn of 1929 also saw very few investors shorting the market only one seventh of one percent. This was completely inadequate in absorbing the immense liquidation. The result was an enormous inflation of security prices. Simmons also pointed out that it was not simple over-speculation that caused the crash as many assumed. If that were the case, the market would have crashed eleven months earlier during the actual peak of trading. The most direct reason was the imbalance of the eagerness to buy versus the refusal to sell throughout the Twenties. Part of this refusal to sell was the sizable income tax on capital gains, which investors had no desire to pay.

The Crash would make the general public fiscally wary, and investing would not become widespread again till the 1980s thanks to maturing war bonds, advertisements and a better educated middle class. By that time, the self-winding tickers, once a critical tool, had been left at radio stations for news feed. The mechanical ticker’s use on Wall Street had been discontinued in favor of computers and electronic displays.
Works Cited:


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**Title:** Empire State Building N.Y.C.

**Maker:** Victor Perelli

**Date created:** 1940

Presented by Ilcy Hernandez
The Great Depression began on October 29, 1929. This was the day where millions of people in the United States were devastated by the economic crash. The 32nd president of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, passed the New Deal Programs to aid those who had been affected severely by the Great Depression. One of the programs that was part of the New Deal was the Works Progress Administration, which put skilled and unskilled people to work. Some of the people that were benefited by the Works Progress Administration were artists, one being Victor Perelli. His artwork helped him get through these tough times of crisis.

The Federal Art Project was one of the divisions of the Works Progress Administration. The Federal Art Project employed artists and sought for more education in art, and it also helped in developing research in the natural sciences. Victor Perelli benefited from the Federal Art Project.

Victor Perelli was born on September 5, 1899 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. His parents were actually American citizens so he was considered one as well. He studied at the National Academy of Design and also at the New York Evening School of Art. When the Great Depression hit the nation he was living in Astoria, Queens, with his wife and three kids. His was the main income of the house and he went through really tough times in trying to support his family. He was able to join the Works Progress Administration and continue his artistic career. In 1940 he created the painting “Empire State Building, N.Y.C.”. The New-York Historical Society acquired the painting in 1940.

In this painting, Perelli exaggerated on the size of the Empire State Building, he made it so big that it went as high as airplanes go. He created the painting to portray the optimistic attitude that New Yorkers were having at that time. The Empire State Building is a well-known skyscraper in New York City and it symbolizes New York itself. His painting suggested that New Yorkers had not tumbled down even with the harsh conditions that they were living in. He made New York seem strong and undefeatable. Many New Yorkers try very hard to improve and Perelli is
a perfect example of that change. He was able to support his family and at the same
time he was still able to do what he loved, thanks to the Works Progress
Administration.

The Works Progress Administration did not only help artists to show their
creativity, but it also helped children and adults, and. New York City Education
dramatically increased. Many schools were built and kids had more teachers. One of
the programs for children was the Remedial Reading Program, which taught kids
how to read. The Field Activities Program taught kids about nature and to explore
the city. Education was also offered for adults as well. Men were able to learn about
principles of designs, which involve trade and technical courses. Women also took
classes on housekeeping and nursing. People were not only able to improve their
education but they acquired more knowledge to be able to get a better job.

The unemployment rate in the United States rose up to 25% during the Great
Depression. The whole nation became absorbed in the chaos. Beginning in 1935, the
Works Progress Administration benefited 11.3 million Americans, offering
employment and education for adults and children. Franklin Delano Roosevelt is
considered one of the best presidents that the United States has had due to his
outstanding leadership during the Great Depression.

The painting “The Empire State Building, N.Y.C”, created by Victor Perelli,
benefitting from the Works Progress Administration, shows the motivation that
New Yorkers had in coming out through this tough crisis. New York is known for
being one of the greatest cities in the world and New Yorkers proved it through the
Great Depression.
Works Cited:


**Title:** New York Central Locomotive Model  
**Maker:** Charles B. Lamar  
**Date Created:** Between 1933 and 1939

Presented by Charles McLagan
I will be focusing on the history of railroads in relation to New York City. The Artifact I am focusing on is a model of a New York Central Railroad Locomotive by Charles B. Lamar. This model was built from actual working plans between 1933 and 1939 and was shown at the 1939 World’s Fair. I will use this model to explore the role that railroads have played in shaping New York City through the ages.

The early history of railroads in New York is one defined by industrial rivalry with the other major cities of the East Coast, especially Boston. New York City had a natural advantage over Boston because of the Hudson River, which gave the city direct access to the Erie Canal, one of the most important transport corridors in the country. The Erie Canal opened in 1825 as the first direct water route between the East Coast and the western interior of the country. It was faster than ground transportation and cut transport costs by about 95 percent. In doing this, the Canal was key to turning New York City into the most important Atlantic port. Boston industrialists attempted to compensate for their city’s lack of a water corridor to the Erie Canal by building railroads to the canal. Boston accomplished this with the Boston and Albany Railroad. There was relatively little demand for a railroad to Albany from New York City, since water transport was still the predominant form of freight and personal transport, and the Hudson River was still viewed as an adequate economic corridor. However, this changed when the Erie Canal froze in November of 1845. The message that water transportation was vulnerable was repeated in 1847 when the Hudson River shipping season was cut short by more than two weeks due to unusually cold weather. These events persuaded New York industrialists to push for railroads to and alongside the Erie Canal. Some of the wealthiest men in New York played key roles in the development of America’s railroad empire. These included J. P. Morgan, who oversaw massive consolidations of railroad companies, and Cornelius Vanderbilt, who was responsible for the construction of Grand Central Terminal. The Erie Railroad was completed to Lake Erie in 1851, and the New York and Hudson Railroad was completed to Albany that same year, connecting New York City to Buffalo in what would become part of the New York Central System.
Cornelius Vanderbilt consolidated several New York Railroads into the New York Central Railroad in 1869. Following his death in 1877, Vanderbilt’s son William Henry Vanderbilt took over as president of the New York Central Railroad and continued its expansion. This was in turn continued by William Henry’s son, Cornelius II. The biggest rival to New York Central was the Pennsylvania Railroad. Until the early 20th century, the Pennsylvania Railroad did not have a direct connection to New York City, with services terminating across the Hudson River. In order to compete with Grand Central Terminal, the Pennsylvania Railroad announced a plan in 1901 to build a tunnel under the Hudson River to a new station in Midtown Manhattan. This station, the original Penn Station, was completed in 1910 and was one of the grandest structures in the United States.

The original Grand Central Station lay south of a giant series of rail yards and tracks that stretched up Park Avenue. This caused the area to be dirty and dangerous. When new laws forced the situation to change, engineer William Wilgus proposed moving all the tracks underground in a bi-level arrangement. This was done in the early 1900s. The railroad took advantage of this new arrangement by selling the air rights above the tracks. This turned Park Avenue into the prized real estate location that it is today.

Railroads helped drive the city’s expansion. The New York and Harlem Railroad connected Harlem to Lower Manhattan in 1837, fueling the growth of the city in what was then a sparsely populated suburb. Similarly, the Long Island Railroad helped fuel growth on Long Island. The expansion of the city was further fueled by the elevated railways. Beginning with the Ninth Avenue Elevated Railway in 1868, numerous elevated lines connected Upper and Lower Manhattan and the Bronx.

Inter-city rail travel in the United States peaked during World War II. Following this, the rise of air travel and the interstate highway system led to a drastic decline in rail travel. Because of this, the Pennsylvania Railroad sold the air rights to Penn Station, and in 1964 the station was demolished. This was viewed by many as a tragic loss for the city, and it spurred a large preservationist movement. This movement helped to protect Grand Central from demolition. Just a few years
after Penn Station’s demolition, the inter-city passenger rail network in America was nationalized as Amtrak. This caused the demise of the massive railroad companies that had been the driving force behind railroad expansion. However, large railroad companies continued to operate as freight railroads and owners of most rail track in America. With the increased deindustrialization of the United States economy, railroads have become less important to New York’s economy. But the influence that railroads have had on New York City is impossible to overlook.

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Welder
U.S. Navy – Public Relations Office
June 5, 1944

Dim Out – Statue of Liberty
Unknown Date

City of New York Air Raid Instructions
City of New York
February 17, 1943

Presented By Jenna Lue
Even before the United States had officially entered World War II, the nation had become increasingly active in the conflict. Under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the United States, still recovering from the disastrous stock market crash of 1929, found itself moving further and further away from its isolationist tendencies that had dominated after the first Great War. As seen through FDR’s “Cash and Carry Policy” and the subsequent “Lend-Lease Act,” the nature of American sympathies was anything but neutral as they provided materials to the Allied powers. In the wake of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the inevitable happened. The United States declared war on the Axis powers, Germany and Japan.

Entry into the war impacted every aspect of American life as millions entered the service and those left behind had to fill their roles on the home front. Across the United States wartime production helped revive the failing economy, pumping new life into the nation in the form of job opportunities and increased war supplies demand. At the heart of this wartime conversion was one city: New York.

New York was left crippled following that fateful Black Tuesday which plunged the nation, and eventually the world, into an economic depression. It was during the Great Depression that Fiorello H. LaGuardia emerged onto the political scene as a member of the "Fusion" Liberal and Republican Party coalition. Elected mayor for three terms from 1933 to 1945, LaGuardia successfully displaced the corrupt Democratic political machine, Tammany Hall. By the outbreak of war, LaGuardia was pulling double duty as both mayor of New York City and the appointed head of the Office of Civilian Defense (OCD). Established by Executive Order in May of 1941, the OCD was charged with creating safety procedures in case of attack, black out, or air raid.

An example of the OCD’s work can be found in the image of the City of New York Air Raid Instructions. Issued February 17, 1943, the card gives explicit instructions complete with cartoon depictions on how New Yorkers are to respond to the different emergency signals. Ordered to keep the card visible "for the duration of war," New Yorkers were constantly reminded of the possibility of attack.
Contributing to the growing awareness of the risks the home front may face during times of war was the media, in the form of the very popular radio. In a time before color televisions and smart phones, radio was the primary source of news for majority of American homes. New York City’s population was especially tuned into the radio during World War II as stations like WABC, WEAF, WNYC proved to be vital in keeping the public informed.

The tense atmosphere of the home front in the 1940s was exemplified by the police mandated dim out in New York City. As seen in the photo, Dim Out - Statue of Liberty, the “city that never sleeps” was forced to turn the lights out as a precaution against the "submarine menace" of Axis powers. Under the orders of Police Commissioner Lewis J. Valentine, the city was anything but bright and bustling as New Yorkers took the Commissioner’s words to heart, shading or extinguishing the lights of tall buildings and famous landmarks such Times Square, Coney Island, and the Statue of Liberty. From its issuance in 1942, the citywide dim out lasted for the duration of the international conflict.

The effects of the war were not confined to the numerous precautionary measures implemented throughout the city. The greatest impact of the war was on the economy of New York and, consequently, the rest of the nation. At the center of the city’s economic rebirth was the Brooklyn, or New York, Navy Yard. As one of the primary shipbuilding locations for the war, the Yard served as a symbol of solidarity as well as progress. In contrast to the bleak and alienated aura of the 1930s, the years of World War II were ones of nationalism and hope. The explosion in population and work surrounding the Navy Yard provided further encouragement to New Yorkers as they became cautiously optimistic about the economy.

The entry of women into the workforce spearheaded the economic revival initiated by wartime demands. The labor deficit created by the deployment of American men across seas acted as a catalyst for the growth of the number of working women. The photo, Welder, captured the essence of the changing dynamic for women. With the woman pictured being identified as Victoria M. Kerwin, Welder is one image in a collection of U.S. Navy photos entitled “Women for the First Time Work Aboard Ships in New York Navy Yard.” Heavy industry was being invaded by a
new female presence. This shift in gender roles was further exemplified by the “Rosie the Riveter” campaign that not only encouraged the idea of a working mother and wife, but also placed a high value on the contributions of women on the home front.

A city buried in history, New York has played a pivotal role in the development of the identity of the United States. New York City has made countless contributions to the nation, especially during times of hardship. In the tumultuous years during which the United States participated in the international conflict, later dubbed World War II, the city served as the unofficial headquarters of the home front. Under the guidance of Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia, New York set an example for the country through its skillful use of the radio, tactical procedures, economic resurgence, and unrestrained nationalism.

With the turn of a knob citizens knew how to react to an air raid. The words of a single man shut down the lights of the city's most popular landmarks. A published photo enacted lasting change the world of heavy industry. New York City during World War II was a phenomenal sight. Though tensions were high and danger all too present, the city proved itself to be a symbol of hope and progress as it took on the role as both the cultural and economic center of the nation.
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Title: Maxwell House Coffee Tin
Date created: 1940-1960

Presented by Abbe Klein
The Maxwell House tin first became an iconic image of American coffee in the 1920s. The tin symbolized mass production that made consumer goods widely accessible. Growing consumerism was accompanied by advertising, which originated within the confines of the product's corporation. Advertising quickly became an esteemed niche, and was widespread by the 1920s. Early advertising was limited to selling advertisement space in periodicals. The 1920s saw the start of several advertising agencies whose focus was to help grow business. Companies sought external help and hired psychiatrists to understand and connect to a large audience. An early analysis of this period shows that nationally, companies spent $200 million in 1880, which grew to nearly $3 billion in the 1920s. While these numbers appear contemporary in size, consider the fact that by 1882 Proctor & Gamble was already spending $11,000 on Ivory Soap ads. By 1898 the Nabisco company launched the first million dollar advertising campaign that resulted in the following slogan: "Lest you forget, we say it yet, Uneeda Bisquit." Venues for these advertisements varied from periodicals to radio. Artwork, copy writing and slogans were added, and target audiences were considered. As companies prospered and grew, the demand for advertising and marketing grew. There was a great increase in advertisement spending during World War II. Ads were used to promote patriotism and to maintain the market of rationed products. The demand for advertising services grew even greater at the end of World War II. American economic growth combined with the ability to advertise on television gave way to extreme growth in the advertising industry. Consumers were now able to purchase formerly rationed products, resulting in an unprecedented economic boom. Advertising companies flourished as a result of the escalated economy. The city at the heart of this lucrative industry was New York. The city served as the center of American advertising for its rich culture and quick accessibility to consumer markets.

The United States officially entered World War II in 1941, shortly after Pearl Harbor was attacked. American participation in the war resulted in product shortages. Despite the product shortages, there was an increase in advertisement spending. Advertisements from this time emphasized the importance of preserving the constricted amount of consumer goods. In addition to advertising products,
patriotism was advertised. The American government used advertising for propaganda, public service announcements and to urge citizen involvement in charity drives. One of the most prominent public service advertising campaigns was Rosie the Riveter. This campaign came from J. Walter Thompson Co., a New York based company. This advertisement reads, “We Can Do It!” The purpose of this ad was to encourage the women who replaced men working in factories. Regardless of product shortage, the American advertising industry steadily grew during World War II.

After World War II, an unexpected economic escalation occurred. Many thought that the American economy would depreciate after the war (as it had after World War I). Instead, consumer demands allowed for the economy to prosper during the post-war period. The consumer demands grew with the need for advertising agencies. In 1950 alone, $5.7 billion dollars was spent in the advertising industry, double the expenses in 1945. In addition to the growing consumer market, television allowed for the advertising industry to flourish. Some television advertising was used in the 1940s, however, it became much more frequent in the 1950s. There were more programs available to advertise products. Certain products were advertised on certain programs, and companies used the target demographic of these shows to advertise specific products. The economic boom of the 1950s allowed for American advertising to prosper.

The Maxwell Coffee Tin embodies the turbulent advertising industry from the 1940s through the 1950s. The side of the coffee tin reads, “Good To The Last Drop.” This straightforward slogan emerged from the fierce competition among American advertising agencies. The competition was a result of the profitable consumer market. As market demands grew, the need for advertisements grew. Despite product shortages during World War II, the advertising industry was able to grow through propaganda and public service announcement ads. The American economy thrived after the war, enabling the growth of the advertising industry. New York can be defined by the advertising industry, because the city served as the unofficial center of American advertising during this time.
Works Cited:


Title: Ignorance=fear 1989
Maker: Keith Haring
Date created: 1989

Presented by Ariella Aronova
As artistic styles approached the modern era, artists began to convey more with less; techniques currently perceived as “hipster” began at this time. An artifact that conveys this idea is the “Ignorance=Fear” poster by Keith Haring. This poster advocates the importance of safe sex and the prevention of aids. This was a milestone in the history of New York because hardly, if ever, was there a person who so openly spoke about a struggle they were forced to live with. Keith Haring, like other artists in the 80’s, came to New York looking for his big break. He began using chalk as a medium for his art and drew anywhere he could find a suitable canvas. He became more notable as the anonymous artist who struck the underground subways with his genius, until one day he finally was discovered and his art became displayed everywhere. New movements such as Neo-expressionism, new image painting, east village scene, graffiti art and neo-conceptualism blazed the way for stars, such as Madonna, Charles Clough, Cindy Sherman.

During the 1980’s artists began to blossom and abandon traditional artistic ways. One major trademark of the 80’s and something quickly adapted by artists was the technique of graffiti art. This illegal art which was only previously carried out by criminals and hoodlums was now being glamorized. Although it is still technically the destruction of private property, in Haring’s time it was also something the public devoured and craved more of. Through this street art not only was the town painted in bright colors and words but it was also a center for awareness.

Keith Haring and many artists in the city saw a lot of the bad in society and strove to shed light on it through their drawings. When Haring was diagnosed with AIDS, not much of the disease was brought up in regular conversation, as it was considered a taboo topic. However, Keith forced the public to face the issue through his simple messages and drawings. The impact of one person seeing his “Ignorance=fear” safe sex AIDS campaign was tremendous.

One can compare the 80’s to an enlightenment period. New Yorkers were thrown into a scene of new ideas and methods of self-expression. During this pop culture boom, the iconic television channel MTV was produced. The beginning of the decade was classified by a new romantic movement and inspired a later trend of
heavy metal fashion. The grunge rock/pop music scene influenced not only the fashion of adolescents but also the theme in most artistic pieces.

The impact that modern artistic expression had on New York was the long lasting idea that one did not have to follow certain artistic traditions. Modern art had started in the late 19th century and is still practiced today. Keith Haring was one such influential artist that utilized this new form of thinking to convey his messages in a new manner. This new art movement let creative minds express their issues in society, helped raise awareness, and helped connect people with one another.

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http://novaonline.nvcc.edu/eli/evans/his135/Events/haring90/haring.html
Title: Hard Hat and Respirator

Maker: Mine Safety Appliances and North

Date created: 2001

Presented by Sollana Brown-Irvin
This hardhat and respirator are possessions of Salvatore Romano, a firefighter of the local 731 union. He wore them in the rescue attempt on 9/11. These two artifacts were donated in honor of William T. Dean. Mr. Dean was a 35-year-old vice president at Marsh & McLennan Insurance Company who lived in Floral Park NY with his wife, Tricia and two kids Matthew and Claire Anne. I chose to write about these two artifacts because they represent a rare occasion of people coming out of their own world to unify and help save their fellow people. Seeking no reward, Mr. Romano risked his own safety to save people who had no impact on his own daily life.

At 8:42 am the first plane was crashed into the World Trade Center’s North Tower. Ten minutes later another plane, piloted by Al-Qaeda terrorists, was crashed into the South Tower. Al-Qaeda is a network of Islamist terrorists formerly headed by Osama Bin Laden. Al-Qaeda perceives the United States to be one of its greatest enemies because of their alliance with Israel, military presence in Saudi Arabia, and sanctions against Iraq. According to Sheikh Mohammed, the purpose of the 9/11 attack was to, “wake up the American people.” In that aspect it was successful. As soon as the Twin Towers were hit the response was immediate. All air travel within the United States was immediately halted, for fear of another hijacker. All the children in Lower Manhattan schools were evacuated and sent home with their parents. Over 20 fire trucks and more than 2,000 men and women were dispatched to put out the great flame that had erupted. New Yorkers were everywhere. People were jumping out of windows, taking videos on the street, fighting for their lives in ambulances, giving blood. The city was alive with fluster. The aftermath of the attack was astonishing. What used to be the supreme Twin Towers was now a sea of soot, metal and destruction.

September 11th is a day always remembered with anguish and desolation. It was a day where the people of New York felt vulnerable. Their lives and futures would be forever altered by this momentous tragedy. The aftereffects of 9/11 brought about refinement of security systems, harsher governmental policies on terrorism, economic debt, and influxes in hate crimes, especially directed at people of Middle Eastern decent. The days succeeding 9/11 were filled with countless
attacks directed toward Muslims. Many Sikhs were confused with Muslims because of the turbans the men wore, and as a result were also threatened. The number of reported hate crimes against Muslims went from 28 in 2000 to 481 hate incidents in 2001, a more than 1600% increase. The United States government enacted the Patriot Act, which allowed them to detain and hold an alleged foreign terrorist without charge, prosecute that alleged terrorist without being bound by a time constraint, and to also monitor all communication devices used by the accused man. Although this act was popular after the World Trade Center attacks, many saw it as opportunistic and unconstitutional. The World Trade Center housed over 430 companies between the two towers. Those companies employed over 50,000 people. But that represents only a portion of the jobs that were lost. Not only were these companies affected strongly by the attack, but also many small businesses in lower Manhattan were in ruins. In total, around 600,000 positions were lost due to the terrorist attack. Immediately after 9/11, weekly claims for unemployment insurance more than doubled. Within a week of the incident, the Dow Jones Industrial average fell 7.1%.

The lives of nearly three thousand people were taken by the 9/11 terrorist attacks; three thousand different people ranging from firefighters to insurance agents and from children to terrorists. This attack was not aimed at any particular group of people; it was directed towards our beliefs, our imperialist nature. Al-Qaeda found it corrupt and biased. 9/11 tested not only New Yorkers but all Americans. Were we willing to stand up and protect our own “moral code” no matter the repercussions? Were we willing to put our immediate desires aside and help those in need? From the start of our nation with the American Revolution through the World Trade Center attack on September 11th, 2001, when the freedom and liberty of Americans have been threatened, we have fought to protect it.
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http://timeline.national911memorial.org/#/Explore/3

Constantly changing and redefining itself, New York emerged from the ashes of 9/11 a new city. American journalist John Avalon described a post 9/11 New York:

We now recognize that we are all part of a larger narrative, and while our city may never be the same, we will be better and stronger as a result of all we have experienced. Much has been taken from us, but much remains; and even in the dark, a great deal of light still shines upon the city of New York.

Both a financial and cultural hub, New York City has stood for four centuries as a melting pot of people from almost every corner of the earth. The reading of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the terrorist attack of 9/11 are events part of a larger narrative of New York, both creating a unity unique to the metropolis of the East Coast. Between these events is a history filled with political corruption, political triumph, feats of engineering, economic panic, artistic movements and masterpieces, social reform, tragedy and transformation. New Yorkers may be markedly different than one another in their heritage, they may move in different directions, yet they are constantly aware they must move forward together. New Yorkers share the consciousness that their city is a symbol of the United States, a place that has, and will continue to affect the nation and entire world. - AL