

Archiving the archives

The world's collections of historical advertisements and marketing ephemera

Fred Beard

*Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Oklahoma,
Norman, Oklahoma, USA*

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Abstract

Purpose – When advertising historians began searching for substantial collections and archives of historical advertisements and marketing ephemera in the 1970s, some reported such holdings were rare. This paper aims to report the findings of the first systematic attempt to assess the scope and research value of the world's archives and collections devoted to advertising and marketing ephemera.

Design/methodology/approach – Searches conducted online of the holdings of museums, libraries and the internet led to the identification and description of 179 archives and collections of historical significance for historians of marketing and advertising, as well as researchers interested in many other topics and disciplines.

Findings – The lists of archives and collections resulting from the research reported in this article represent the most complete collection of such sources available. Identified are the world's oldest and largest collections of advertising and ephemera. Also identified are quite extraordinary collections of historically unique records and artifacts.

Research limitations/implications – The online searches continued until a point of redundancy was reached and no new archives or collections meeting the search criteria emerged. There remains the likelihood, however, that other archives and collections exist, especially in non-Western countries.

Originality/value – The findings make valuable contributions to the work of historians and other scholars by encouraging more global and cross-cultural research and historical analyses of trends and themes in professional practices in marketing and advertising and their consequences over a longer period than previously studied.

Keywords Marketing history, Advertising history, Advertising archives, Marketing ephemera

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

When Richard W. Pollay, historian and self-proclaimed “PAC-rat” (an acronym referring to “paper and advertising collector”), first began studying advertisements in the mid-1970s, he reported there were few significant holdings. Two exceptions were the New York Public Library and the US Library of Congress. As [Pollay \(2011, p. 507\)](#) explained:

At both, I gained access to the stacks and made bibliographic notes on their entire holding on advertising. The mere fact that this was feasible working alone evidences the modest size of the holdings.

Curators of the John W. Hartman Center ([Duke University Libraries, 2017a](#)) have similarly proposed that:

[...] advertising has not been as thoroughly documented as other aspects of business. Not all companies that advertise hold on to their past work. Few ad agencies retain comprehensive files



of their output. And relatively few libraries, museums, or archives make an effort specifically to document the industry.

In stark contrast, [Engelhardt \(2002, p. 1097\)](#) concluded that “the history of advertising has been exhaustively documented and exhibited”.

Despite the efforts of some libraries, museums and industry organizations to acquire historically significant advertisements and marketing ephemera (promotional objects or media executions created for a one-time, limited purpose), there has been no systematic attempt to assess the scope, breadth or research value of the available holdings. To what extent are the observations regarding the limited nature of these primary source materials still valid? In addition to providing an answer to this question, the effort to locate and describe the world’s archives and special collections of advertising and ephemera reported in this article make several valuable contributions to the work of historians and other scholars.

First, advertising has been a prevalent feature of society, culture and the everyday lived experience of people around the world for hundreds of years. Consequently, ads and ephemera are valuable primary sources for marketing and advertising historians, as well as researchers of agriculture, business, consumption and consumerism, ethnic studies, film and media studies, graphic design and printing, health and recreation, political science, popular culture, women’s studies and many other subjects. Indeed, as noted by the curators at The Huntington Library (2015):

Graphic images have long been valued for their ability to pictorially document the past, but it is only in the last quarter century that printed images have been regarded by historians and other scholars as important historical sources in their own right.

Marketing historians have also noted the value of primary sources that include such imagery ([Witkowski and Jones, 2006](#)). Among the earliest examples of advertisements combining text and images are trade cards, widely used by advertisers and prized by collectors for some 400 years. The curators of the John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera at Oxford’s [Bodleian Libraries \(2015\)](#) insightfully described part of their collection’s visual and historical value:

Through these uninterpreted primary source materials, we are transported back to an age where commercial streets were hung with colourful shop signs, where a great number of exotic imported goods were available, where provincial shops sold an amazing range of goods, where booksellers sold not only books but also patent medicines and musical instruments, and where women had a surprisingly prominent role.

Second, identifying and describing the world’s archives and collections of advertising and marketing ephemera may contribute to more global and cross-cultural research on marketing and advertising history. [Schwarzkopf \(2011\)](#), who reviewed historical studies published between 1980 and 2010, concluded that much advertising history is limited by at least two methodological-theoretical norms: “Americanization” and “Modernization”. America, as [Schwarzkopf \(2011, p. 534\)](#) observed:

[...] is talked up by historians into the embodiment of a new stage in the development of humanity, a stage dominated by modern consumer capitalism. With the takeover of European culture by the American advertising industry, thus goes the story, history had finally arrived at the level of a globally shared consumerist consciousness.

Historians confirm the influence of American professional practices and consumer culture during the twentieth century. However, some call into question the existence of a globally shared, advertising-induced consumerist culture and, more important, the role of US

advertising professionals in creating and sustaining it (Beard, 2016). Industry structures, professional practices and creative expression often evolved independently from American influence, both before and during the twentieth century. Influences flowing from Europe to the USA include an early consumer culture, advertising-supported print media and ephemera, poster design and other creative approaches and traditions, and the practices of early advertising agents. Moreover, theories and practices from the USA were often adapted internationally according to local economic, social, legal and cultural conditions. The identification of significant collections of advertising and ephemera and, in addition, advertising agency and corporate archives representing a broad population of countries and cultures, could encourage research that specifically avoids the “Americanization” limitation evident in advertising’s historiography.

Third, identifying the world’s collections and archives may also help encourage a more comprehensive study of advertising’s history by identifying significant trends and important themes in beliefs and practices and their consequences during much earlier periods than previously studied and, thus, avoid the “Modernization” limitation. Many historians seem to have concluded that advertising is a mainly twentieth-century phenomenon, an inevitable consequence of modernity’s march toward rationalization, industrialization and free-market capitalism as they emerged and evolved in most Western countries and cultures. One of the few efforts to investigate the development of advertising prior to the nineteenth century, however, showed that it proliferated much earlier, that it came into use for similar reasons and that much the same pattern of reasons occurred around the globe, including among the ancient civilizations of the Middle and Far East (Beard, 2016).

In summary, locating and describing the world’s archives and collections of historical advertisements and marketing ephemera could encourage more research on medieval and early-modern advertising across a broader population of countries and cultures. Topics especially ripe for exploration by way of advertisements and ephemera include consumer acceptance of and resistance to various message appeals and tactics and how these helped shape consumerism and long-term developments in advertising. Others include the relationships between advertising and consumers and how societies have chosen to manage the promotion and consumption of potentially harmful products, such as the patent medicines of the nineteenth century, alcohol, tobacco and gambling (Schwarzkopf, 2011). Indeed, tacksups and handbills for curatives and quack nostrums were among the first advertisements circulated in the streets of London in the 1500s. The identification of agency and influential advertiser archives – such as those of the Foote, Cone & Belding agency, Eastman Kodak Co. and International Harvester Co. – could similarly contribute to historical interest in the adoption of agency practices, provide insights into the more recent culture of mergers and acquisitions that led to the global advertising conglomerates of the late twentieth century and aid researchers interested in the evolution of the relationships among manufacturers, distributors, retailers and advertising agencies.

Method

As used in contemporary archival theory and practice, an “archives” consists of a variety of different types of records and artifacts related to the history of a particular organization or institution and held because of their historical or informational value (Mannon, 2015). In contrast, a “collection” refers to a group of artifacts or objects linked by theme or type (Powell *et al.*, 1999). With the goal of identifying primary sources most useful to marketing and advertising historians, advertising and ephemera archives and collections were initially defined as all those held by libraries and museums. In addition to these, however, many

industry collections (e.g. Outdoor Advertising Association of America), private collections (e.g. the Virtual Collins Radio Museum), user-generated collections (e.g. Adforum) and dealer collections (e.g. AdClassix) also emerged as valuable primary sources. Such collections and archives were included among the findings when they contributed to the goals of this research in one or more of the following ways:

- they were international in scope;
- they were especially large;
- they included pre-twentieth century records and artifacts or
- the topic or focus was unique or historically significant (e.g. CircusWorldBaraboo.org).

An example of a collection that did not meet any of these criteria for inclusion is the one available at *Reminisce*, an online magazine. The site's publishers have posted a collection of perhaps 100 vintage advertisements, with no unifying theme. This is also common in the area of trade cards and ephemera and among online user-generated Flickr groups and similar blogs.

Advertising archives and collections were also distinguished from publications and other media that can be searched using "advertisement" as a search term. Examples of these include the ProQuest collection of historical newspapers, the collections of mainly nineteenth-century newspapers and magazines available online at Accessible Archives, and the Vanderbilt University Television News Archive. Advertising can also be found in collections of other media, such as the Vanderbilt Television News Archive or The Museum of Television and Radio. While useful primary sources, access to some can be difficult, making collections of advertisements preferable to publications and broadcast programming. As noted by curators at the Hartman Center ([Duke University Libraries, 2017a](#)):

Some libraries keep only recent issues or recent years; others may preserve older periodicals and newspapers only on microfilm, which can be difficult to use and which prevents users from viewing images in color.

The limited collections offered by some of the global advertising industry's more than 450 competitions and award shows were also excluded because they failed to meet the requirements for inclusion.

The online search for archives and special collections began with internet search engines and the use of various combinations of the following search terms: "advertising archive", "advertising collections" and "marketing ephemera". Examination of the identified archives, special collections and exhibitions resulting from the online research occasionally led to the identification of additional sources in a snowball fashion. Sources were then reviewed online for their consistency with the inclusion criteria. The process continued until further keyword searches led to redundant findings and no additional archives or collections emerged.

Findings

The search identified the 179 archives and collections listed in [Tables I-III](#). They are categorized and described based on the type of holder (library, museum, industry organization or individual), whether they consist of archives or collections, time periods, media type(s), topics or emphasis, collection size, geographic scope, online availability and whether a subscription or fee is required for access.

The first category consists of museum and library archives and collections. This category – maintained by government, charitable, educational and other mainly institutional entities – is the most valuable because it includes the oldest records and artifacts, and they are permanent. The second most important category consists of industry and user-generated collections. Although almost none of these sources include pre-nineteenth-century artifacts or records, many are global in scope, are very large or are devoted to unique topics. Some of the largest are also searchable. As an example, an online search of the Ads Through the Ages collection using the term “Chevrolet” retrieved more than 1,000 Chevrolet ads from throughout the twentieth century. A limitation is that, as a group, some may not remain permanently accessible. The third category consists of dealers, vendors and for-profit service suppliers. Online dealers offer vintage ads for sale and occasionally substantial digitized collections with unlimited access. Some of these collections would be of value to researchers studying particular products, services, manufacturers or brands. Sources that merely consist of links to other sources were excluded. An example is tvadsvie.com, which consists entirely of links to commercials available on YouTube.

A few sources, mainly museums and libraries, hold multiple collections and archives (e.g. the Hartman Center at Duke University). These important sources are identified in column one of [Tables I](#) and [II](#) with a footnote and the extent of their holdings described in the findings. Similarly, most exhibitions were not identified separately when they were drawn from a larger archive or collection. An example is the Bodleian Library’s Toyota Project, which consists of automobile and transportation ephemera drawn from the John Johnson Collection. Other examples include The Emergence of Advertising in America: 1850-1920 and the Medicine and Madison Avenue exhibitions at the Hartman Center, which were drawn from its larger collections. The Women’s Health and Wellbeing exhibition of the Dublin City Library and Archive is listed separately, however, because it was not clear whether the library’s holdings include other advertisements or ephemera.

In some cases, when it was not possible to identify the size of a collection, it was because advertisements were included among other items or related artifacts. Good examples are the collection at The Huntington, the collection of circus posters at [CircusWorldBaraboo.org](#), the McCormick – International Harvester archives or the Images from the History of Medicine collection at the US National Library of Medicine. In other cases, information on the size of some holdings was simply unavailable.

Museum and library archives and collections

Most of the museum and library archives and collections listed in [Table I](#) are located in the USA, although the following countries are also represented: Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, France, India, Ireland, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden and the UK. There are also several significant collections with a global scope. Most are collections of advertisements and ephemera. However, especially noteworthy archives or collections, based on size or topical focus, include those held by the History of Advertising Trust (HAT), the National Museum of American History, the Hagley Museum and Library, the Harvard University Library, the Hartman Center at Duke University, the George Eastman House, the Advertising Museum Tokyo, the Stanford Tobacco Advertising Database, the University of Wisconsin Digital Collections and ReclameArsenaal.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries are especially well represented among the sources. However, museums and libraries holding the world’s oldest collections are America’s Historical Imprints, the National Museum of American History (Smithsonian), the Library of Congress (USA), the British Museum, the Harvard University Library, the New York Museum of Modern

Name ^a	Location/holder	Type ^b	Period	Medium/ ephemera ^c	No. of records/ artifacts ^d	Topic(s)	Geographic focus	Online access	Subs./ fee
The Ads ^a	History of Advertising Trust	A/C	1800s-2010s	P/TV	3,000,000	Varied	UK	Some	Yes
Advertising ^a	The National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution	A/C	1700s-1990s	P/TV/E/PA	N/A	Varied	USA	Some	No
Advertising	Hennepin County Library, Digital Public Library of America	C	19th-early 20th century	P/E	N/A	Varied	USA	Some	No
The Advertising Artwork of Dr Seuss	Mandeville Special Collections Library, University of California, San Diego	C	1930s-1940s	P	199	Varied	USA	Some	No
Advertising Card Collection	The Kansas City Public Library	C	1860-1905	E	2,000	Varied	USA	Some	No
Advertising Cards	Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill	C	1931	E	74	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Advertising/Promotional Ephemera Collection	Libraries, University of Missouri-Kansas City	C	1890-1960	P/E	120	Varied	USA	No	No
Advertising Trade Cards ^a	Harvard Library/Baker and Schlesinger Libraries	C	1575-1984	P/E	N/A	Varied	Global	No	No
Advertising Trade Cards	Penn State University Library	C	1900s	E	150	Varied	USA	Some	No
American Memory: Advertising ^a	The Library of Congress	C	1600s-2000s	P/TV/E	31,000	Varied	USA	Some	No
America's Historical Imprints	NewsBank	C	1749-1900	E	3,913	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Artifacts	The Henry Ford	C/A	1825-2013	P	2,135	Varied	USA	Some	No
Avon Company Archive	Hagley Museum and Library	A	1858-2012	P/TV/PA/E	7,051	Avon Co.	Global	Yes	No
Bowling Green State University Libraries ^a	Bowling Green State University	C	1870s-1960s	P/E	1,001	Varied	USA	No	No
Catalogues	Canadian Museum of History	C	1880-1975	P	42	Mail-Order Catalog	Canada	Yes	No
Centre National Des Archives De La Publicité	Ministries of Culture and of Finance, France	C	1897-2010s	TV	300,000	Varied	Global	Some	No
Centre D'Archives Publicitaires	Association des Agences de Publicité du Québec	A/C	1997-2010s	TV	45,000	Varied	Quebec	No	No
Centre for Ephemera Studies	University of Reading	C	1800s-2000s	E	20,000	Varied	Global	Some	No
The Charles and Laura Dohm Shields Trade Card Collection	Walter Havighurst Special Collections Library, Miami University	C	Late 19th-Early 20th	E	1,700	Varied	USA	1,643	No
The Pauley Center for Media Collections ^a	The Pauley Center for Media The Strong Museum	C	1920s-2010s	TV/R	10,000	Varied	USA	Yes	No
		C/A	1840s-2000s	P/O/E	50,000	Varied	USA	No	No

(continued)

Table I.
Museum and library archives and collections of historical advertisements and marketing ephemera

Table I.

Name ^a	Location/holder	Type ^b	Period	Medium/ ephemera ^c	No. of records/ artifacts ^d	Topic(s)	Geographic focus	Online access	Subs/ fee
Collection of Trade Cards	Department of Special Collections, UCLA Library	C	1870-1900	E	400	Varied	USA	No	No
Collection of Trade Cards, Mainly British, 1700-1850	The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York	C	1700-1850	E	NA	Varied	Britain	No	No
Collections ^a	Online Archives of California	A/C	N/A	P/R/E	N/A	Varied	USA	No	No
Collections	The Prelinger Library and Archives	C	NA	TV	N/A	Varied	USA	Some	No
Early Advertising Collection	Tri-College Digital Library, Bryn Mawr College	C	1790-1910	P	1,044	Varied	America, Europe	Yes	No
Early Advertising of the West	University Libraries, University of Washington	C	1867-1918	P	450	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Ephemera Collection	Earl Gregg Swem Library at William & Mary College	A/C	1800-2014	P/E	1,200	Varied	USA	No	No
Follow the Sun: Australian Travel Posters 1930s-1950s	National Library of Australia	C	1930s-1950s	P	780	Travel/ Tourism	Australia	Some	No
Fulton Street Card Collection	Brooklyn Public Library	C	Late 1800s- Early 1900s	E	358	Varied	Brooklyn	Yes	No
The Geography of Slavery	University of Virginia	C	1736-1803	P	4,000	Slavery	USA	Yes	No
Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History ^a	Duke University Library	A/C	1850s-2000s	P/TV/O/E	3,000,000	Varied	Global	Some	No
Historical Automobile Catalogs	New York Public Library	C	1900s-1930s	P	8,000	Auto- mobiles	USA	Some	No
Historical Prints, Ephemera, and Manuscripts ^a	The Huntington, San Marino, California	C	1500s-1800s	P/P/A/E	200,000	Varied	Britain, USA	Some	No
Images from the History of Medicine	US National Library of Medicine	C	1400s-2010s	P	N/A	Health	Global	Some	No
An Inventory of Dayton's Newspaper Advertising	Minnesota Historical Society	C	1904-1968	P	NA	Dept. Store	USA	No	No
The Jim Crow Collection of Racist Memorabilia	Ferris State University	C	1870s-1960s	P	N/A	Varied	USA	No	No
The John Johnson Collection	Bodleian Library, University of Oxford	C	1600s-1900s	P/E	1,500,000	Varied	UK	Some	Yes
Julian P. Kanter Political Commercial Archive	Political Communication Center, University of Oklahoma	C	1936-2016	TV/R	90,000	Political	USA	No	Yes

(continued)

Name ^a	Location/holder	Type ^b	Period	Medium/ ephemera ^c	No. of records/ artifacts ^d	Topic(s)	Geographic focus	Online access	Subs./ fee
Kodak Advertising and Publications, 1880-1980	George Eastman House, Rochester, New York	A/C	1884-1988	P	95,000	Eastman Kodak Co.	Global	Some	No
The Library for Advertising and Marketing	Advertising Museum Tokyo (ADMT)	A/C	1600s-2010s	P/TV	190,000	Varied	Japan	No	No
Library of Historic Advertising & Ephemera	Middlesex University, London	C	19th-1970s	P/E	150,000	Varied	Britain, USA	No	No
The Living Room Candidate	Museum of the Moving Image	C	1952-2012	TV	300	Politics	USA	Yes	No
Louisiana Runaway Slave Advertisements, 1836-1865	Louisiana State University Library	C	1836-1865	P	274	Slavery	USA	Yes	No
M-135: Mallinckrodt Company Advertising Scrapbooks	St. Louis Mercantile Library	C	1940s-1960s	P	N/A	Chemicals	USA	No	No
Marchand Archive	University of California, Davis	C/A	1964-1997	P	8,600	Varied	Global	Yes	No
Marketing Brochures	The Computer History Museum	C	1948-1988	P	261	Computers	USA	Some	No
National Archives of Australia	Detroit Public Library	C	1933-1974	P	910	Varied	Australia	Some	No
National Automotive History Collection	National Library of Sweden	A	1900s-2010s	P	33,000	Auto- mobiles	Global	Some	No
The North Carolina Runaway Slave Advertisements	The University of North Carolina at Greensboro	C	1700-2016	E	14,000,000	Varied	Sweden	Some	No
Pepys' Trade Cards	Magdalene College Libraries, Cambridge	C	1751-1840	P	2,300	Slavery	USA	Yes	No
Perkins Collection 1850 to 1900 Advertising Cards	Historic Map Works	C	1650s-1700s	E	41	Varied	Britain	No	No
Posters ^a	The National Archives	C	1850-1900	E	127	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Posters and Printed Ephemera	The Wolfsonian Library, Florida International University	C	1930s-1940s	P/R	17,000	WW II	USA	Some	No
Radio Advertising Bureau Collection	University Libraries, University of Maryland	C	1880-1945	P/E	4,232	Varied	Global	Some	No
Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections ^a	Library & Technology Services, Brandeis University	C	1954-1968	R	3,300	Varied (Disks)	USA	No	No
Seed and Nursery Trade Catalogue Collection	OSU Libraries, Oregon State University	C	1910s-1940s	P	350	War	Spain, USA	Some	No
		C	1830s-1960s	P	2,000	Propaganda Nursery/ Seed Trade	Global	No	No

(continued)

Table I.

Table I.

Name ^a	Location/holder	Type ^b	Period	Medium/ ephemera ^c	No. of records/ artifacts ^d	Topic(s)	Geographic focus	Online access	Subs./ fee
Sellebration	The New Zealand Film Archive - Nga Taonga Sound & Vision	C	1960s-2000s	TV	12,500	Varied	New Zealand	Some	No
Special Collections: Ephemera	Maryland Historical Society Special Collections	C	N/A	P/E	N/A	Varied	Maryland	No	No
Stanford Research into the Impact of Tobacco Advertising	Stanford School of Medicine	A	1930s-2000s	P	11,214	Tobacco	Global	Yes	No
Stemhardt Advertising Archive	Department of Media, Culture, and Communication, New York University	A	1920s-2000s	P/TV	2,000	Varied	USA	Restricted Access	No
The Stewart Culin Collection of Advertisements	University of Pennsylvania Library	C	1884-1886	P	90	Varied	USA	Some	No
Television Commercials	UCLA Film & Television Archive	C	1948-2010s	TV	10,000	Varied	USA	No	No
Trade Cards ^a	The British Library	C	1600s-2000s	P/E	5,000	Varied	Europe, UK	Some	No
Trade Cards	Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire, England	C	17th-19th	E	700	Varied	Europe	Some	No
Trade Catalogs	University of Delaware	C	1750s-2010s	P/E	N/A	Varied	USA	Some	No
TV Digital Archives	Museum of Broadcast Communications	C	N/A	TV	12,000	Varied	USA	Some	No
University of Wisconsin Digital Collections ^a	State Historical Society of Wisconsin	A/C	1753-1985	P/E	N/A	Farming	Global	Some	No
University Archives ^a	University of Illinois Library	A/C	1800s-1980s	P/O	6,000,000	Varied	NA	Yes	No
Victorian Trade Cards	Paul J. Gutman Library, Philadelphia University	C	1880-1900	E	700	Textile Industry	USA	Some	No
Victorian Trade Cards	University of Iowa Libraries	C	N/A	E	N/A	Varied	USA	Some (365)	No
Women's Health and Wellbeing	Dublin City Library and Archive	C	1730s-1945	P	100	Health Products	Ireland	45	No
WWI and WWII Poster Collection	Franklin & Marshall College Library	C	WWI and WWII	P	148	WWI and WWII	USA	Some	No
150 Years of Advertising in the Netherlands	ReclameArsenaal	A/C	1800-1999	P/TV/E/PA	20,889	Varied	Nether-lands	Yes	No

Notes: ^aSource's holdings consist of multiple advertising/marketing ephemera archives or collections; ^bA (archive), C (collection), P (newspapers/magazines/posters/labels/catalogs), TV (television/video/film), R (radio), O (outdoor/out-of-home/signage), D (digital), DM (direct mail/marketing), E (ephemera/trade cards/bill headings), PA (packaging); ^dthe number of records/artifacts is approximate, unless counted or specifically reported by the source (N/A = not available)

Art, the Tri-College Digital Library (Bryn Mawr College), the University of Virginia, The Huntington, the US National Library of Medicine, the Bodleian Library (University of Oxford), the National Library of Sweden, the Advertising Museum Tokyo, the University of Delaware, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Magdalene College Libraries and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Print advertisements and ephemera, mainly in the form of trade cards, are the most widely held artifacts. However, substantial collections of television commercials are held by the following sources: the HAT, the Advertising Archives Center, the National Museum of American History, the Julian P. Kanter Political Commercial Archive, the Library of Congress, the Ministries of Culture and of Finance, the Paley Center for Media, the New Zealand Film Archive, the Hartman Center, the Advertising Museum Tokyo, the UCLA Film & Television Archive and ReclameArsenaal.

The collections vary greatly in size, with some of the largest consisting of those held by the HAT, the Centre National Des Archives De La Publicité (France), the Hartman Center, the National Library of Sweden, the Advertising Museum Tokyo and the University of Illinois Archives. Most include advertisements and ephemera across a variety of product and service types. Some, however, are thematically focused on unique categories of products, services and communication objectives. These include the collections of runaway slave advertisements at the University of Virginia, LA State University Library and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Other uniquely topical collections are the Images from the History of Medicine (US National Library of Medicine), the historical automobile catalogs and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (New York Public Library), the Kodak Advertising Collection (George Eastman House), The Living Room Candidate (Museum of the Moving Image), the Julian P. Kanter Political Commercial Archive and the collection devoted to women's health (Dublin City Library and Archive).

The online availability of the collections and archives also varies considerably. Those offering access to their entire holdings include the Wilson Special Collections Library (University of North Carolina Chapel Hill), the Hagley Museum and Library, the Canadian Museum of History, Tri-College Digital Library, University Libraries (University of Washington), the Brooklyn Public Library, University of Virginia, the Museum of the Moving Image, LA State University Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, the National Archives, Historic Map Works, Stanford School of Medicine, University of Illinois Library and ReclameArsenaal. Consistent with their institutional missions, few charge a fee or require registration for access to their collections and archives, although many restrict physical access due to the fragility of their holdings or because they are stored off-site.

The first of [Table I](#)'s sources holding more than one archives or collection is the UK's HAT, which holds the J. Walter Thompson London Archive, the HAT Press Tear-Sheets Archive, the BBC "Washes Whiter" TV Commercials Collection (1955-1989) and the HAT Library (www.hatads.org.uk). Although a current online search of the Smithsonian Institution using the term "advertising" (www.siris.si.edu) retrieves nearly 18,000 individual artifacts and records, a review of these shows that the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History holds dozens of archives and collections involving advertisers and brands (e.g. Alka-Seltzer, Federal Express, Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, Marlboro, Nike), advertising agencies (e.g. NW Ayer Advertising Agency archives), as well as important collections of advertisements and ephemera (e.g. The Warshaw Collection of Business Americana).

The Online Archive of California (OAC) offers access to descriptions of special collections and archives held by more than 200 California universities, libraries, historical societies and museums. A search of the OAC using the term "advertising" currently retrieves 1,909

records. Among them are numerous collections of mostly late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century print ads, posters and ephemera representing a wide variety of products and services. The OAC also enables searches of The Huntington (San Marino), which holds several large and early collections of ads and ephemera (including the Jay T. Last Collection of Graphic Arts and Social History), as well as important archives, such as the Albert D. Lasker Papers.

A search of the Harvard Library system (Hollis.Harvard.edu), which includes the Baker and Schlesinger Libraries, currently retrieves 859 records on the topic of advertising, when limited to Archives/Manuscripts. Among them are dozens of collections of trade cards and marketing ephemera, including some 60 devoted to ephemera from the country of Israel. The Library of Congress American Memory lists three collections at its “Advertising” link: The BroadSides and Printed Ephemera ~ ca. 1600-2000 collection; The Coca-Cola Advertising ~ Films ~ 1951-1999 collection and the Prosperity and Thrift: The Coolidge Era and the Consumer Economy, 1921-1929 collection. However, holdings also include four collections of television commercials and public service announcements and the By the People, For the People: Posters from the WPA, 1936-1943 collection. Similar to the National Museum of American History and Harvard Library holdings, further searches of the Library of Congress would likely reveal additional archives and collections that meet this study’s criteria for inclusion.

The Bowling Green State University Libraries system holds a collection of advertising proofs (hard, one-off copies of finished advertising production artwork) and a Victorian-era trade card collection. The Duke University Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History holds several important advertising agency archives (e.g. J. Walter Thompson agency), collections (e.g. the Liggett & Myers Tobacco Advertising Collection), advertising and marketing executive career papers and the Nicole DiBona Peterson collection of advertising cookbooks. Advertising cookbooks were small, specialty printed booklets containing recipes and product information delivered by mail for free or at very low cost and circulated by national advertisers of the newly available packaged foods and convenience goods in the late 1800s. They reinforced the brand awareness being created by advertising in the growing number of women’s magazines of the period, such as the *Ladies Home Journal* and *The Homemaker*. Becoming increasingly sophisticated in design and print quality, they served a number of other useful purposes in the lives of female homemakers, many of whom did not have access to the magazine ads mainly targeting middle- and upper-class women (Duke University Libraries, 2017b). The Hartman Center also offers access to thousands of advertisements in the form of three online collections drawn from its larger holdings: The Emergence of Advertising in America: 1850-1920, Medicine and Madison Avenue and the AdViews digital archive.

The National Archives and Records Administration (USA) holds three collections of posters:

- (1) Sow the Seeds of Victory! Posters from the Food Administration During the First World War (WWI);
- (2) Powers of Persuasion: Poster Art from the Second World War (WWII); and
- (3) A New Deal for the Arts.

Similarly, there are two important collections of posters held by Brandeis University’s Library & Technology Services: Spanish Civil War Posters (more than 250 anti-Fascist posters, sent or brought home by American volunteers in the Spanish Civil War) and WWI and WWII Propaganda Posters.

The British Library holds at least three major collections consisting of thousands of posters, print ads, advertising trade cards and ephemera. They include the Evanion Collection of Ephemera (originally purchased by the British Museum in 1895), the Banks Collection of Trade Cards (Sir Joseph and sister Sarah Sophia) and the collection of Sir Ambrose Heal. The British Library has digitized thousands of these cards and made them available online. The multiple collections held by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin include the McCormick – International Harvester Co. Archives, the Foote, Cone & Belding Records and the Singer Sewing Card collection. The University of Illinois Library holds four important collections and archives: The D’Arcy Collection, the Woodward Collection of Advertising, the Stanley F. Cohen Collection and the Advertising Council archives.

Advertiser, industry and user-generated collections

These sources (Table II) include individual advertisers (e.g. American Apparel, Prada), industry organizations (e.g. the Ad Council) and industry user-generated collections (e.g. Adforum, Adland Advertolog). They also include what could reasonably be referred to as “fan” sites (i.e. digital PAC-rats). These are valuable in that they often focus on historically significant topics, are often global in scope or are very large. The Jay Paull online collection of Vintage Print Advertisements is a good example, as are a few of the user-generated collections to be found on The Internet Archive. Many other digital PAC-rat collections, however, merely consist of Flickr or blog collections of “favorites”, mostly from the twentieth century. These were not included among the findings when they failed to meet any of the criteria for inclusion.

Most of the sources in this category hold advertising or ephemera from the USA, although the following geographic areas are also represented: Bangladesh, Brazil, Europe, France, India, Japan, Portugal and the UK. Several collections have a global emphasis, combining advertisements and ephemera from multiple countries. Although many of the sources identify themselves as “archives”, there are only two actual archives among the 88 sources in Table II: the Ad Council, which includes case studies and research findings on campaign effectiveness; and the Robert L. Parkinson Library and Research Center, which holds a variety of documents and artifacts related to the history of the circus in America.

The majority of the sources are collections of advertisements from the twentieth century. Collections consisting of ads and ephemera from the mainly late nineteenth century include those held by the following: Jay Paull Vintage Print Advertisements, historyworld, the Brookston Beer Institute, Jim’s Burnt Offerings, Kodakgirl.com, Philipp Lenssen (Vintage Ad Browser), the Museum of Vintage Commercial and Advertising Art and Madeleine Blondel (70 Years of Terrot Posters). Print advertisements are the most widely collected artifacts among these collections as well. However, substantial collections of TV and radio commercials are held by AdRespect, Adforum, Mediabistro Inc., the Advertising Icon Museum, Advertolog, Advertising Archive Bangladesh, Coloribus, The Internet Archive (Classic Television Commercials), Great-Ads, Adland, Adstorial, Old Commercials (YouTube Channel) and tellyAds. The largest collections are held by historyworld; the Ads Through the Ages Flickr Group; Advertolog; Advertising Archive Bangladesh; Coloribus; Adland; the Outdoor Advertising Association of America; Adforum; gogd.tjs-labs.com (The Gallery of Graphic Design); Oldcaradvertising.com; Adverlicious; Philip Morris Incorporated; CircusWorldBaraboo.org; the Museum of Brands, Packaging & Advertising; tellyAds; Philipp Lenssen and the Museum of Vintage Commercial and Advertising Art.

Most of the collections and archives include advertisements and ephemera across a variety of product and service classes and categories. Some that are thematically focused on especially unique products, services and communication objectives include those held by AdRespect,

Table II.
Industry, media and user-generated collections of historical advertisements and marketing ephemera

Name ^a	Location/holder	Type ^b	Period	Medium/ ephemera ^c	No. of records/ artifacts ^d	Topic(s)	Geographic focus	Online access	Subs./ fee
Ad Campaigns	George Lois	C	1950s-2000s	P/TV	46	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Ad Library	AdRespect	C	1950s-2010s	P/TV	600	LGBT	Global	Yes	No
Ad Library	Jay Paull Vintage Print Advertisements	C	1830s-1920s	P	N/A	Varied	USA	Some	No
Advert Museum	historyworld	C	1890s-1950s	P	1,585	Varied	Britain	Yes	No
Ads of the World	Mediabistro Inc.	C	2000s-2010s	P/TV/R/D	80,000	Varied	Global	Yes	Yes
Ads Through the Ages	Flickr Group	C	N/A	P	43,000	Varied	Global	Yes	No
The Ad Archive	Kenneth Cole Productions, Inc.	C	1982-2010s	P/TV	410	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Advertisement Archive	Virtual Collins Radio Museum	C	1945-1983	P	400	Collins Radio Co.	USA	Yes	No
Advertisements	www.aresluna.org	C	1980s-1990s	P	217	Tech.	Global	Yes	No
Advertising	American Apparel	C	1995-2009	P	706	Apparel	USA	Yes	No
Advertising Archive	Quincy Compressor	C	1923-1959	P	9	Air	USA	Yes	No
Advertising Campaigns Archive	Prada	C	1987-2016	P	104	Compressors	USA	Yes	No
Advertising Icon Museum		C	N/A	P/TV/R	3,000	Fashion	N/A	No	No
Advertising Slogan Hall of Fame	AdSlogans	C	1900s-2000s	P/TV	125	Varied	USA, Europe	Yes	Yes
Advertolog Advertising & Commercials	Advertolog	C	1970s-2010s	P/TV/R/O/D	2,000,000	Varied	Global	Yes	Yes
The American Package Museum		C	N/A	E/PA	144	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Archive	Advertising Archive Bangladesh	C	1973-2010s	P/TV/R/O	16,000	Varied	Bangladesh	Yes	No
Art & Beer	Brookston Beer Institute	C	1890s-N/A	P	2,002	Beer	Global	Yes	No
Artes & Artists' Orem		C	N/A	P	Count	Varied	Portugal	Yes	No
Basil Rathbone in Advertisements	Marcia Jessen	C	1940-1970	P/TV	47	Varied	UK	Yes	No
Beer Belongs	Vintage Ads	C	1950s-1960s	P	56	Beer	USA	Yes	No
Bell System Advertisements	Beatrice Companies, Inc.	A	1930s-2004	P/TV	137	Bell System	USA	Yes	No
BSA Catalogs	The BSA Club of NSW	C	1960-1972	P	220	BSA Motor-cycles	USA	Yes	No
Catalogs	R2RTexas' Reel To Reel Tape Recorder OnLine Museum	C	1900s-2010s	P	12,680	Audio Equip.	USA	Yes	No
Chris Mullen's Advertising Archive	Dr Chris Mullen	C	1920-1980	P	12,200	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Classic Animated Advertising	Cartoon Research	C	N/A	P/TV	N/A	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Classic Television Commercials ^a	The Internet Archive	C	1940s-1970s	TV	1,414	Varied	USA	Yes	No

(continued)

Name ^a	Location/holder	Type ^b	Period	Medium/ephemera ^c	No. of records/artifacts ^d	Topic(s)	Geographic focus	Online access	Subs./fee
A Collection of Fine Campaigns	Great-Ads	C	N/A	TV	N/A	Varied	Global	Yes	No
Collection of Old Advertising	Toutenparfum.com	C	1997-1988	P	332	Perfume	France	Yes	No
Collectors On-Line (Matchbooks) ^a	The Rathkamp Matchcover Society	C	N/A	E	N/A	Varied	Global	Some	No
Coloribus Advertising Archive	Coloribus	C	N/A	P/TV/O/R/D	2,000,000	Varied	Global	Yes	Yes
Commercials	80stvthemes	C	1998s	TV	100	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Commercials	Adland	C	N/A	P/TV/R	45,000	Varied	Global	Yes	Yes
Creative	Communication Arts	C	N/A	P	2037	Varied	Global	Yes	No
Creative Library	Outdoor Advertising Association of America	C	1996-2010s	O	10,333	Varied	Global	Yes	No
Creative Library	Adforum	C	1998-2010s	P/TV/R/O/D/DM/PA	150,000	Varied	Global	Yes	Yes
Creativity	<i>Advertising Age</i>	C	2000s	P/TV/R/O/D/DM/PA	23,264	Varied	Global	Yes	No
Ducati Brochure Gallery	Steve Allen's Bevel Heaven	C	N/A	P	35	Ducati Motor-cycles	UK	Yes	No
Ephemera	Bolex Collector	C	1930s-1960s	P	158	Cameras	USA	Yes	No
FiberClassics Library	Classic Boat Library	C	1950s-1960s	P	N/A	Pleasure Boats	USA	Yes	No
Found in Mom's Basement ^a	Paula Zargaj-Reynolds	C	1900s-2000s	P	N/A	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Gallery	The New York Times Madison Project	C	1920s-1960s	P	2,487	Varied	Global	Yes	No
Gallery of Book Trade Labels	Greg Kindall	C	1720-1970s	P	2,500	Book Trade	Global	Yes	No
The Gallery of Graphic Design	gogd.tps-labs.com	C	1930s-1960s	P	10,930	Varied	USA	Yes	No
The Gender Ads Project	Scott A. Lukasz	C	N/A	P	3,000	Gender Issues	N/A	Yes	No
Golden Age Spotlight Collections on Advertising	Digital Delt Online	C	1930s-1960s	P/R	N/A	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Inde-Allumettes	Patricia M.	C	N/A	PA	898	Match-boxes	India	Yes	No
Indian TV Ads	Rekha Technologies Pvt Ltd	C	2000s-2010s	TV	278	Varied	India	Yes	No
Japanese Matchbox Labels	Jane McDevitt	C	1920s-1940s	PA	395	Match-boxes	Japan	Yes	No
Jim's Burrett Offerings	Jim Shaw	C	1880s-2000s	P/PA/E	N/A	Tobacco	Global	Yes	No
Just Creative Ads		C	2011-2016	P/TV/DM	N729	Varied	Global	Yes	No
Magazine Ads	Kodakgirl.com	C	1890s-1980s	P	99	Kodak Cameras	USA	Yes	No
Matchboxes and Collectible Matchbooks		C	N/A	PA	6,937	Match-books	Global	Yes	No

(continued)

Table II.

Table II.

Name ^a	Location/holder	Type ^b	Period	Medium/ ephemera ^c	No. of records/ artifacts ^d	Topic(s)	Geographic focus	Online access	Subs./ fee
Matchbook Labels	Jane McDevitt	C	1950s-1960s	PA	1,986	Match-book Labels	Global	Yes	No
Museum of Advertising ^a		C	1900s-2000s	P	N/A	Varied	Global	Yes	No
Old Car Advertisements	Oldcaradvertising.com	C	1903-1989	P	12,000	Auto-mobiles	USA	Yes	No
Old Car Print Ads and Commercials	Cars and Stripes	C	1940s-1980s	P/TV	674	Auto-mobiles	USA	Yes	No
Old Commercials ^a	YouTube Channel	C	1940s-2010s	TV	N/A	Varied	Global	Yes	No
Old Radio Commercials	Oldtimeradiofans.com	C	1920s-1950s	R	150	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Old Time Radio Advertisements	The Best of Old-Time Radio	C	N/A	R	254	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Online Advertising & Marketing Archive	Advericious	C	N/A	D	7,500	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Original Player Piano Advertising	The Player Piano Page	C	N/A	P	29	Pianos	England, USA	Yes	No
Original Sales Literature Library	Phantom Coaches	C	1916-1990s	P	1,400	Service Cars	USA	Yes	No
OTR Commercials	Louis V. Genco	C	1920s-1950s	R	113	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Our Campaigns	The Ad Council	C	1940s-2010s	P/TV/R/O/D	14	Issues	USA	Yes	No
Paper Ephemera	jerici cat	C	N/A	P	1,763	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Phillip Morris US Inc. Advertising Archive	Phillip Morris Incorporated	C	1900s-2010s	P/O/DM	97,850	Tobacco	USA	Yes	No
Propagandas antigas rural willys	Rural Willys Brasil	C	1940s-1980s	P	102	Willys/ Jeep	Brazil	Yes	No
Robert L. Parkinson Library and Research Center	CircusWorldBaraboo.org	A/C	N/A	P/E	10,000	Circus	USA	Some	No
The Robert Opie Collection	Museum of Brands, Packaging & Advertising	C	N/A	E/PA	500,000	Varied	Britain	No	No
Sexism and Racism in Advertising	Reed Digital Collections	C	2000s	P	880	Sexism and Racism	Global	Yes	No
1960 - 1969 TV Set Advertising telly Ads	Television History	C	1930-2010s	P/TV	59	Tele-visions	Global	Yes	No
TV Commercialpedia		C	N/A	TV	20,988	Varied	UK	Yes	No
Trucking Ads From Days Gone By	Hank Suderman	C	2009-2010s	TV	N/A	Varied	N/A	Yes	No
"Victorian Scrapbook"	The Trade Card Place	C	1940s-1960s	P	Count	Trucks	USA	Yes	No
		C	1870-1900	E	1,420	Varied		Yes	No

(continued)

Name ^a	Location/holder	Type ^b	Period	Medium/ephemera ^c	No. of records/artifacts ^d	Topic(s)	Geographic focus	Online access	Subs./fee
Video Game Ads	Tom Zjaba	C	1970s-1980s	P	163	Video Games	USA, UK, Canada,	Yes	No
Vintage Ad Browser	Philipp Lennsen	C	1850s-2010s	P	123,311	Varied	USA	Yes	No
The Vintage Christmas Catalog Archive Project	WishbookWeb.com	C	1933-1988	P	51	Christ-mas Catalogs	Global	Yes	No
Vintage Telephone Advertisements	Dennis Markham's Classic Rotary Phones	C	1916-1966	P	92	Tele-phones	USA	Yes	No
Vintage Toaster Ads	Hyperkitten Tool Co.	C	1908-1940s	P	67	Toasters	USA	Yes	No
Vintage Tool Ads	The Museum of Vintage	C	1877-1943	P	296	Tools	USA	Yes	No
VintaScope	Commercial and Advertising Art	C	19th-Mid 20th	P	12,683	Varied	Global	Yes	Yes
World of Coca-Cola	The Coca-Cola Co.	C	1890s-2010s	P/O/DM/E/PA	1,200	Coca-Cola	USA	No	No
19th-Century Sewing Machine Trade Cards	International Sewing Machine Collectors' Society	C	19th	E	15	Sewing	USA	Yes	No
1920s Transit Posters	www.Chicago-Long	C	1920s	P	25	Chicago L	Chicago	Yes	No
100 London Underground Posters	IAQ Graphic Design	C	1911-2013	P	100	London Under-ground	London	Yes	No
70 Years of Terrot Posters	Madeleine Blondel	C	1893-1961	P	40	Bicycles	France	Yes	No

Notes: ^aSource's holdings consist of multiple advertising/marketing ephemera archives or collections; ^bA (archive), C (collection); ^cP (newspapers/magazines/posters/labels/catalogs), TV (television/video/film), R (radio), O (outdoor/out-of-home/signage), D (digital), DM (direct mail/marketing), E (ephemera/trade cards/bill headings), PA (packaging); ^dthe number of records/artifacts is approximate, unless counted or specifically reported by the source (N/A = not available)

Table II.

Virtual Collins Radio Museum, Catskill Archive, Brookston Beer Institute, R2RTexas' Reel To Reel Tape Recorder OnLine Museum, Bolex Collector, Classic Boat Library, Kodakgirl.com, Phantom Coaches, Philip Morris Incorporated, CircusWorldBaraboo.org, Reed Digital Collections and Madeleine Blondel. Most offer online access to their collections and few charge a fee for access.

A current search of The Internet Archive (<https://archive.org>) using the term “commercials” or the names of particular advertisers or brands (e.g. Winston) retrieves hundreds of individual items and compilations of TV commercials and print ads. Many of these, however, are links to the AdViews search engine and collection at the Hartman Center, while others are of limited historical value and mainly consist of user favorites from the second half of the twentieth century. However, The Internet Archive also includes the Political TV Ad Archive, a collection of 2016 primary election TV commercials. The Found in Mom’s Basement source lists 136 collections of print advertisements, ranging in size from one to dozens. Although most of the collections and ads fall into the “favorites” category, some focus on specific or unique media, products, advertisers and campaigns. The online Museum of Advertising is a user-generated collection of print ads and magazine covers, organized into approximately 200 thematic categories. As another blog source, the historical value of this collection is similar to that of Found in Mom’s Basement. The website maintained by the Rathkamp Matchcover Society includes links to several collections of matchbooks. A current search of YouTube using the term “old commercials” retrieves approximately 2,000,000 results. Researchers studying particular advertisers, brands, product or service categories or decades would find it helpful to begin their search for television commercials on YouTube.

Dealers, vendors and syndicated/subscription service collections

Some of the sources in this category (Table III) are valuable because they are especially large, broadly geographic in scope or helpful to historians studying particular twentieth-century brands or products. All but one of the sources includes print advertisements, six include television commercials and three include radio commercials. All the collections consist of advertisements representing a variety of product or service categories except one (Toyadz.com).

Several of the sources hold advertising or ephemera from the USA only, while the rest are global in their geographic scope. The majority are collections of advertisements of the twentieth century; there are no archives. All but two of these sources charge a fee for access to their collections. The subscriptions or fees, however, are well within many researchers’ budgets. For example, adflip offers access to its collection for an entire year for \$204.

Conclusions, limitations and recommendations for future research

The findings of this systematic attempt to assess the breadth and research value of the world’s collections and archives devoted to advertising and marketing ephemera show that prior beliefs regarding the limited nature of these holdings were at least partly incorrect. Taking into account the multiple collections held by some sources, it is apparent there are hundreds of collections and archives and that the combined number of records and artifacts is in the millions. One explanation for this finding is that digital access to the holdings of libraries and museums and decades of efforts to catalog them have simply made it easier to locate them. Another explanation is that the number of holdings grew during the latter half of the twentieth century, as individual and organizational collectors continued to donate their collections and archives to libraries and museums.

Name	Location/holder	Type	Period	Medium/ephemera ^a	No. of records/artifacts ^b	Topic(s)	Geographic focus	Online access	Subs/fee
adflip		C	1940-2001	P	N/A	Varied	USA, UK, Canada	Some	Yes
AdSlogans Advertising	PosterPlus.com	C	1900-2016	N/A	400,000	Varied	Global	No	Yes
The Advertising Archives	Larry and Sue Viner	C	1890-1988 1890s-2010s	P P/TV/E	40 1,000,000	Varied Varied	Global Britain, France, Spain, USA	Yes Yes	Yes Yes
Artist Bios and Artwork	American Art Archives	C	1890-1985	P	N/A	Varied	USA	Yes	No
Best Ads ontv.com		C	NA	P/TV/O/R/D	15,356	Varied	Global	Yes	Yes
Collectomania		C	1870-1960	E/PA	300,000	Varied	Global	Some	Yes
CreativeClub.com		C	1997-N/A	P/TV/R/O/D/DM	N/A	Varied	UK	No	Yes
The Ephemera Catalog	Bill & Carol Mobley	C	N/A	E	N/A	Varied	N/A	Some	Yes
Gaslight Advertising Archives, Inc.		C	1880s-2010s	P	1,000,000	Varied	USA	No	Yes
Original Antique Label Art	Cerebro	C	Pre-WWI-Pre-WWII	P	N/A	Varied	USA	Some	Yes
Toyadz.com		C	N/A	P	N/A	Toys	USA	Some	No
TV Commercials	Clipland	C	1940s-2010s	TV	3,483	Varied	Global	Some	Yes
TV Ads	AdClassix.com	C	1900s-1980s	P/TV	1,000,000	Varied	Europe, North America	Some	Yes
U.S.TV ADS		C	1960s-2010s	TV	1,000,000	Varied	USA	No	Yes
Vintage Magazine Ads	atticPAPER	C	1900s-1950s	P	N/A	Varied	USA	Some	Yes

Notes: ^aP (newspapers/magazines/posters/labels), TV (television/video/film), R (radio), O (outdoor/out-of-home/signage), D (digital), DM (direct mail/marketing), E (ephemera/trade cards/bill headings), PA (packaging); ^bthe number of records/artifacts is approximate, unless counted or specifically reported by the source (N/A = not available)

Table III.
Dealer, vendor and syndicated/subscription service collections of historical advertisements and marketing ephemera

An increase in research on advertising history may also help explain the large number of collections and archives now available. Histories of advertising date to the nineteenth century (Sampson, 1874), and general historical texts were written in the 1920s, 1950s, 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. Moreover, the 1980s and 1990s were especially productive decades for advertising historians (Beard, 2016). Another explanation for the availability of the collections and archives revealed by this study is that scholars in a wide variety of disciplines are, as suggested earlier, increasingly recognizing the research value of advertisements and marketing ephemera.

The findings also make a valuable contribution to marketing and advertising's historiography by highlighting the existence of archives and collections focusing on particular periods, countries, product and service categories and communication objectives. For instance, historians interested in pre-nineteenth-century topics will find several valuable sources identified in Table I. The first newspaper advertisement was printed in either 1625 (Presbrey, 1929; Wood, 1958) or 1632 (Frederick, 1925), and by the mid-1700s, many newspapers in England and the American colonies existed primarily to carry advertising. Media development, professional practices and trends in creative expression during this period, however, have gone largely uninvestigated, possibly due to the belief that few comprehensive primary sources existed. For historians interested in marketing ephemera, the findings reveal 44 collections, some with a global scope. Recommendations and additional sources and methods for using ephemera in historical research can be found in Neilson (2005) and Rickards (2000).

As another example, the findings show that researchers with an interest in how medicines and health-related products have been marketed and advertised could helpfully start with the US National Library of Medicine, the Dublin City Library and Archive and the Hartman Center. However, they would also want to include searches at the National Museum of American History, the Harvard Library and the Library of Congress American Memory, since the findings show there may be relevant and important collections and archives among their holdings. Indeed, the study's findings reveal the existence of many topically and historically important collections, ranging from cigarettes to slavery to the advertising of pleasure boats. In addition, historians pursuing cross-cultural topics will find collections and archives representing 16 countries in Tables I and II, as well as numerous collections with a global scope.

The findings of this study are limited in at least three ways. First, there likely remain many important archives and collections held by some of the major institutional sources that have not yet been identified (e.g. the National Museum of American History, the Harvard Library system and The Huntington). It would be especially valuable to continue the effort to identify historically significant ad agency archives and the archives of companies that had important influences on the development of marketing and advertising practices, such as the Quaker Company, Procter & Gamble or Barron G. Collier's Consolidated Street Railway Advertising Company. Thus, investigations of just the holdings of these major sources would make a valuable contribution to the research literature and the work of historians. Crew and Fleckner's (1986) exploration and description of some of the holdings in advertising history of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History offers an excellent example of the type of research called for.

Second, the search located only a few collections and archives devoted to specific cultural and ethnic topics in the USA. There may be other important ones that were not identified in this search because their online descriptions failed to mention that holdings include advertisements and ephemera. One example of this problem is the Schomburg Center for

Research in Black Culture at the New York Public Library. Although the Schomburg Center houses print ads and TV commercials, the center's online description makes no reference to them. Similarly, the website describing the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia makes no mention of marketing ephemera, although there are some ephemera items among the museum's memorabilia.

Third, the findings of this study are limited by the failure to identify collections and archives representing many countries and cultures, including those in Asia, Africa and South America. Fortunately, the findings also point the way to how these sources, collections and archives might be located. Searches for these would best begin with research among national archives, government-funded museums and major university library holdings. This would undoubtedly be the most direct and efficient method for bringing to light archives and collections similar to those held by the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, the National Archives, the Hartman Center and the Harvard University Library in the USA, as well as the British Library in the UK.

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Corresponding author

Fred Beard can be contacted at: fbeard@ou.edu

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