



Smithsonian

*National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center*

## Guide to the Warshaw Collection of Business Americana Subject Categories: Magic

NMAH.AC.0060.S01.01.Magic

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1999

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
<b>Title:</b>	Warshaw Collection of Business Americana Subject Categories: Magic
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1750-1957
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAH.AC.0060.S01.01.Magic
<b>Creator:</b>	Warshaw, Isadore, 1900-1969
<b>Extent:</b>	0.51 Cubic feet (consisting of 1 box, 2 oversize folders, 1 map case folder.)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	A New York bookseller, Warshaw assembled this collection over nearly fifty years. The <i>Warshaw Collection of Business Americana: Magic</i> forms part of the Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, Subseries 1.1: Subject Categories. The Subject Categories subseries is divided into 470 subject categories based on those created by Mr. Warshaw. These subject categories include topical subjects, types or forms of material, people, organizations, historical events, and other categories. An overview to the entire Warshaw collection is available here: <a href="#">Warshaw Collection of Business Americana</a>

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Magic is a portion of the Business Ephemera Series of the Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, Accession AC0060 purchased from Isadore Warshaw in 1967. Warshaw continued to accumulate similar material until his death, which was donated in 1971 by his widow, Augusta. For a period after acquisition, related materials from other sources (of mixed provenance) were added to the collection so there may be content produced or published after Warshaw's death in 1969. This practice has since ceased.

### Materials in the Archives Center

Archives Center Collection of Business Americana (AC0404)

### Forms Part Of

Forms part of the [Warshaw Collection of Business Americana](#) .

Missing Title:

- [Series 1: Business Ephemera](#)
- [Series 2: Other Collection Divisions](#)
- [Series 3: Isadore Warshaw Personal Papers](#)
- [Series 4: Photographic Reference Material](#)

### Preferred Citation

Warshaw Collection of Business Americana Subject Categories: Magic, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

## Restrictions

Collection is open for research. Some items may be restricted due to fragile condition.

## Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

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## Scope and Contents

This subject category- Magic- consists primarily of booklets, advertisements, catalogues, and ephemera relating to magic mostly during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The materials are intended for a general audience and probably would have been of particular interest to children and young adults. Most of the collection contains instructional booklets on magic and information on how to purchase these types of booklets as well as magic accessories. Of particular interest are the advertisements and programs for specific magicians and magic shows. The small collection of magic tricks gives a glimpse into the type objects that could be purchased by the magic aficionado at this time.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Types of Materials:

Business ephemera  
Ephemera

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## Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1-3	Magic Publications, 1833-1957 Notes: Contains books, pamphlets, and clippings with instructions for how to be a magician. Although these materials range in date from the early 19th century to well into the 20th century, the bulk of the materials are undated, but are most likely from the late 19th century. Classic magic tricks, such as card tricks, rope tricks, and mind reading are all explored in this section.
Box 1, Folder 4	Advertisements, 1901-1910 Notes: Advertisements for magicians, magic shows, and magic shops. Many of the advertisements show pictures of the magicians. The bulk of the material is undated and is probably from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
Box 1, Folder 5	Programs, 1884-1950 Notes: Consists of programs from magic shows. Usually these shows contain more than just a magic element and many of them included other types of performers, like musicians and comedians. This material includes the program from the International Magical Congress held in Barcelona in 1950.
Box 1, Folder 6-7	Ventriloquism, 1753-1939 Notes: Includes a few small books with instructions on becoming a ventriloquist. There are also some clippings, which advertise for ventriloquists. From the later years, there are photographs and correspondence of Valentine Vox, a ventriloquist during the thirties. There are a couple of letters between Valentine Vox and James Madison, in which Vox hires Madison to write some jokes for his routine.
Box 1, Folder 6	Ventriloquism
Box 1, Folder 7	Valentine Vox
Box 1, Folder 8-9	Magic Tricks for Purchase, 1750-1945 Notes: Catalogues and mail order forms for books and other instructions on performing magic tricks. There are also a few labels from the ice-cream treat "Sundaettes" which show how to do simple magic tricks. Some of the tricks that could be purchased were magic dice, an enchanted egg cup, magic pack of cards, and a magic bag. Some of these materials contain illustrations of the trick for sale.
	Magic Tricks, 1905-1929 Notes: Contains magic coins, magic cards, and some magic money. The coins come in a variety of different metals and contain symbols, though there are not any instructions for interpreting the symbols. There is a complete set of cards used to determine someone's age and name, a set used to determine someone's

age, and couple of extra cards without instructions. The money bills are larger than today's currency and are not realistic in appearance.

Box 1, Folder 10	Coins
Box 1, Folder 11	Cards
Box 1, Folder 12	Money
	Oversize Notes: The oversize materials have not been processed or inventoried.
Oversize 35, Folder 1	Magic
Oversize 130, Folder 1	Magic
Map-folder 11	Magic