

**Albert D. Lasker (1880-1952) Collection, 1884-2010**

**MS172**

**Box 1-16**

**Abstract:** The Albert D. Lasker Collection contains the primary and secondary materials used by Arthur W. Schultz and Jeffrey L. Cruikshank while writing The Man Who Sold America: The Amazing (but True!) Story of Albert D. Lasker and the Creation of the Advertising Century. Materials in the collection include interviews, correspondence, client files, and advertisements.

**History:** Albert D. Lasker was born in Freiburg, Germany, on May 1, 1880. The son of German-Jewish immigrants, Lasker grew up in Galveston, Texas. As a young man, Lasker dreamed of becoming a newspaper reporter. In an attempt to coerce his son into a better profession, Lasker's father, Morris Lasker, sent Albert to Chicago, Illinois to work as an office boy for the advertising agency of Lord & Thomas when he was 17.

A breakout star at Lord & Thomas, Lasker was perpetually searching for the answer to the question, "What is advertising?" In 1904, Lasker met ad man John E. Kennedy, who told him that advertising is "Salesmanship in print." This short answer to Lasker's question, in addition to Claude Hopkins' idea of "Reason Why" advertising, would affect the course of his entire advertising career. With a new direction for advertising campaigns, Albert Lasker, and by extension, Lord & Thomas, gained clients such as Sunkist (named by Lasker), Kotex, American Tobacco Company, and Pepsodent, among others. Lord & Thomas were at the forefront of advertising innovation, using films, billboards, and radio to market their clients' products. By the time Lasker retired from advertising and sold Lord & Thomas to Emerson Foote, Fairfax Cone, and Don Belding in 1942, he had become known as the father of modern advertising.

Albert Lasker's involvement with Republican politics began when he was just sixteen years old. While working for *The Galveston News*, Lasker travelled with Republican Robert B. Hawley's congressional campaign to report on Hawley's speeches. The experience made a lifetime Republican out of Lasker. He utilized his public relations experience as he ventured into political life, serving as a key advisor in Warren G. Harding's 1920 campaign for President of the United States. Once in office, Harding appointed Lasker as chairman of the United States Shipping Board, a position he held from 1921 to 1923. Lasker's public relations skills were utilized again in the advertising blitz that ruined Upton Sinclair's 1934 campaign for Senator of California. In his personal politics, Lasker stayed true to his Republican ideals throughout his life. His biggest ideological shift came during World War II. Initially a staunch isolationist, Lasker switched his stance during World War II, going so far as to endorse Douglas Miller's book, "You Can't Do Business With Hitler!"

In later years, Lasker's life was heavily influenced by his third wife, Mary, and her devotion to philanthropy; among the many causes they frequently donated to were cancer research, medical research, and the birth control movement, with Lasker suggesting a new name for the Birth Control Federation—Planned Parenthood. Albert Lasker died in 1952 at the age of 72. Today, the Lasker Awards, given to those who have made major contributions to the field of medicine or medical research, remains a testament to Lasker's devotion to philanthropy and championing innovation.

**Description of the Collection:** The Albert D. Lasker Collection fills 16 boxes and spans the years 1884 to 2010. The entirety of the collection was used as research for the writing of The Man Who Sold America. Though mostly made up of photocopies and secondary materials, there

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is primary source material throughout the collection. Many copied materials come from other institutions, such as Texas Tech University, NARA, the University of Chicago, the Wisconsin Historical Society, the Library of Congress, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Library and are marked as such. The collection is divided into three series, Biographical Materials, Advertising, and Political Career. Descriptions of the series are as follows:

**Biographical Materials** contains items that give an overarching view of Lasker's life. Materials include photographs, newspaper clippings, and interviews by Boyden Sparkes. In 1937, Lasker hired Sparkes to ghostwrite his autobiography. These interviews were Sparkes' research for that book, which was never completed. There is one subseries within the series, Family, which contains folders on Lasker's immediate family. The series contains both primary and secondary materials, ranging from personal correspondence to posthumous articles.

**Advertising** contains materials that illustrate the early years of the advertising profession, including many house advertisements from Lord & Thomas and subject files on former Lord & Thomas employees, such as John Kennedy and Claude Hopkins. There are also folders with materials relating to the agency after Lasker's departure, renamed Foote, Cone, & Belding. There are two subseries, Clients, which includes subject files on Lord & Thomas clients, and Radio, which contains materials relating to the radio programs produced as part of the advertising for Pepsodent ("Amos n' Andy") and the American Tobacco Company ("Your All-Time Hit Parade").

**Political Career** contains items that relate to Lasker's longtime involvement with Republican politics, including his position as an advisor to Warren G. Harding's 1920 campaign for President, his time as chairman of the United States Shipping Board, and his behind-the-scenes orchestration of the advertising campaign to upend Upton Sinclair's 1934 campaign for California Senator.

**Provenance:** Donated to Northwestern University Special Collections by Arthur W. Schultz, June 14-December 1, 2010

**Restrictions:** None

**Separations:** .5 linear feet of duplicates were removed from the collection.

**Processor:** Amanda Axel, April 2014-May 2014

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Title</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
<b>Series 1: Biographical Materials</b>			
1	1	General Biographical Materials	1925-2005
	2	"Carl Byoir: Public Relations Pioneer" by Robert James Bennett	1968

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	3	Early Life	1938
	4	Mental Illness	1925
	5	Mill Road Farm	1930-2009
	6	Judaism and Anti-Semitism	1918-2005
	7	Leo Frank	1914-2009
2	1	Arthur Brisbane	1884-1937
	2	Baseball and William Wrigley	1919-2006
	3	Correspondence	1922-2003
	4	Manton-Levy Trial	1939-1940
	5	Charitable Contributions	1949-1953
	6	John Hertz	1938-2007
	7	Lasker on Himself	1936-2009
	8	Photographs	Undated
3	1	Boyden Sparkes	1937-2003
	2	Boyden Sparkes Interviews	1937
	3	Boyden Sparkes Interviews	1937-1938
	4	Boyden Sparkes Interviews	1937-1938
4	1	<u>The Man Who Sold America</u> Notes and Drafts	Undated

**Sub-Series 1: Family**

	2	Lasker Family	2008-2009
	3	Morris Lasker, Father	Undated
	4	Eduard Lasker, Uncle	1918
	5	Flora Walker Lasker, First Wife	Undated
	6	Mary Lasker Foreman, Daughter	1937
	7	Edward Lasker, Son	1957-2008
	8	Frances Lasker Brody, Daughter	2009-2010
	9	Mary Woodard Reinhardt Lasker, Third Wife	2009
	10	Mary Lasker Oral History	1962-1965
	11	Family Correspondence	1922-1923
5	1	Citation for Advertising Hall of Fame	1958
	2	Retirement Scrapbook	1942-1943

**Series 2: Advertising**

6	1	Early Advertising	1926-2003
	2	Patent Medicine	Undated
	3	Direct Mail and Coupons	1923-2006
	4	Outdoor Advertising	1919-1940

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	5	Movies	1930-2004
	6	Gallup Surveys	Undated
	7	The Depression	1933-1939
	8	Office Procedures	1913-1942
	9	Messengers Lord & Thomas	1891-1986
7	1	Lord & Thomas House Advertisements	1902-1935
	2	“Judicious Advertising”	1904-1910
	3	Lord & Thomas Creeds	Undated
	4	“The Greatest Advertisement Ever Made,” <i>World Executive’s Digest</i>	Undated
	5	Agency Advertising	1950-1984
	6	Lord & Thomas and Logan	1926-1934
	7	Lord & Thomas, New York Office	Undated
	8	Lord & Thomas, California Office	1921-1936, Undated
	9	Lord & Thomas News, San Francisco	1942-1943
	10	Lord & Thomas, International	1922-1948
	11	Foote, Cone, & Belding	1951-1981
8	1	Foote, Cone, & Belding News, San Francisco	1943-1945
	2	Don Belding	1933-1982
	3	Fairfax Cone	1926-1969
	4	Sheldon Coons	1936-1938
	5	Don Francisco	1922-1940
	6	Claude Hopkins	1909-1993
	7	John Kennedy	1904-1998
9	1	John Kennedy	1904-1998
	2	Irwin Miller	1912-1917
	3	Irwin Miller	1918-1919
	4	Irwin Miller	1920-1937
	5	Frank Munsey	Undated
	6	Mr. Rindfus	Undated
	7	J. Walter Thompson	1928-1932, Undated
	8	Lord & Thomas and Logan Pamphlets	Undated
	9	<u>Safe Advertising</u> by Claude Hopkins	1909
	10	<u>Real Salesmanship in Print</u> by Lord & Thomas	1911
	11	<u>Scientific Advertising</u> by Claude Hopkins	1923
10	1	“The Cooperative Advertising of Farm Products,” by Don Francisco	1924

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	2	“Meeting of Representatives of Lord & Thomas”	1925
	3	Ruthrauff & Ryan Inc. Publications	1930-1939
	4	Boston Conference on Distribution	1934
	5	<u>Thirty-One Years at Madison and Dearborn Streets</u> by Guy S. Osborn	Undated
	6	Lectures by James W. Young	Undated
	7	Articles and Presentations by Albert D. Lasker	1926-1935
11	1	Advertisement: “You Can’t Do Business With Hitler!”	1942
	2	“Advertising Age,” December 7	1964
	3	<u>Common Sense in Advertising</u> by Lord & Thomas	Undated
	4	<u>What is life like—with the enemy less than twenty minutes away?</u>	c. 1941

**Sub-Series 1: Lord & Thomas Clients**

12	1	Client Lists	1898-1948
	2	Clients	1931-1937
	3	Van Camp	1905-1938
	4	Sunkist	1908-2008
	5	Quaker Mill Company	1906-2010
	6	Palmolive	1911-2005
	7	Sun Maid	1922-1923, Undated
	8	Pepsodent	1923-1955
13	1	Pepsodent	1923-2000
	2	California Walnut Growers Association	1932, Undated
	3	All-Year Club, Southern California Tourism	1934-1937
	4	Kotex	1928-2004
	5	Kleenex	1936-1952
	6	The American Tobacco Company	1929-2009
	7	The American Tobacco Company Correspondence	1929-1948
	8	The American Tobacco Company Correspondence	1929-1948
	9	Frigidaire	1935-1990
	10	Royal Baking Powder	Undated
14	1	Signed Photo of George W. Hill	1931
	2	Southern Pacific Railroad	1944

**Sub-Series 2: Radio**

15	1	Radio, General	1933-2005
	2	“Amos n’ Andy”	1936-2004
	3	“Your All-Time Hit Parade”	1944-1947

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4 "Kay Kyser's College of Musical Knowledge" 1944

**Series 3: Political Career**

16	1	Republican Politics	1919-1936
	2	United States Shipping Board	1920-2006
	3	United States Shipping Board	1919-1938
	4	<u>"World's Greatest Ship": The Story of the Leviathan, Vol. 2</u> by Frank O. Braynard	1974
	5	Charles Curtis	1933, Undated
	6	Charles Dawes	1936
	7	Will Hays	1920-2005
	8	Joseph Medill McCormick	1921-2010
	9	John Callan "Cal" O'Laughlin	1919-1930
	10	Upton Sinclair	1935-2006