

# Color Our Collections: Advertisements as Coloring Pages from the *Fairmont West Virginian*

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## Slide 1: Introduction

Hello everyone. I'm Stewart Plein, the Curator of Rare Books and Printed Resources in the West Virginia and Regional History Center, special collections for WVU. It's under the scope of the "printed resources" part of my title that I serve as the Director of WV's National Digital Newspaper Project. As part of this presentation I've given each of you a coloring book to take home from my talk today. I'm hoping we'll have some fun during this presentation.

Slide 2: Several years ago, as a form of outreach for our WV National Digital Newspaper Project grant, we began participating in the NY Academy of Medicine Library's "Color Our Collections" social media event. Founded in 2016, this annual event is designed to share coloring content from libraries, museums, and archives around the world.

## Slide 3: History

Before I jump into our coloring pages I'd like to share a little history of our project to digitize West Virginia's historic newspapers through our grants funded by NEH and the Library of Congress:

- First grant awarded 2011
- Awarded 5 consecutive grant cycles between 2011 – 2021
- Awarded a 6<sup>th</sup> grant, August 2022
- Funded by NEH and the Library of Congress
- Technical grant partners: Library of Virginia
- 105 newspapers currently available on Chronicling America, the Library of Congress newspaper portal
- Free to read and download
- Keyword searchable
- Coverage: 1790 – 1946

Slide 4: Past coloring books have included images from rare books, archives and regional titles from special collections, like these WVU students from the early 1900's. Notice how the decorations of the dresses spell out WVU!

Slide 5: Here's a selection of coloring pages from the WVRHC 2018 coloring book:

- Garments of the High Priest, *The Nuremburg Chronicle*, Hartman Schedel, 1493.
- Dog at the Fence; *The Story Primer*, G.W. Lewis, Illustrations by Bess Bruce Cleaveland, 1915
- Tulips: J.M. McCullough's Sons Co. Catalogue of Bulbs, Seeds & Sundries, 1907.

Slide 6: This is the cover advertisement for the 2020 coloring book. We took a new approach to the coloring book that year, using hand drawn advertisements from one of our newspapers, the *Fairmont West Virginian*, 1923. I put out a call for completed coloring pages and I'll share some of those with you today.

Slide 7: Housekeeping. Here's one of the advertisements introducing vacuum cleaners. Be sure to take a look at the clothes and hair of this housewife in both panels. Notice how much they change once the new vacuum cleaner arrives! Drudgery be gone!

Slide 8: Now everybody's happy!

Slide 9: Warning! Things might get a little racy . . .

Slide 10: You'll get admirers! This type of hat was also called a Panama hat or a Straw Boater.

Slide 11: That new living room suite! What every woman dreams of!

Slide 12: The Brookfield Butter ad featured this young man. We all thought he was pretty creepy, so we gave him a nickname. He's now known among the staff as Butter Boy!

Slide 13: There's lots of historical information about the Swift Company here. Some of you may be familiar with their products because they're still in business today producing all kinds of iconic American food like Armour hot dogs, Butterball turkey, and Peter Pan peanut butter! I really wanted to add emojis to this slide – so . . .

Slide 14: So, I decided to just put this here! For those of us a certain age – are you singing the jingle yet?

Slide 15: This coloring book proved to be more popular than we could ever have imagined! We were even covered by the Smithsonian Magazine, Feb. 4, 2020.

Slide 16: It's all about the Butter Boy! He sort of became our mascot for the coloring book. He was a popular subject for coloring. Here's some examples.

Slide 17: Who doesn't like butter on their popcorn?

Slide 18: Little Butter Boy Blue

Slide 19: Things are looking a little psychedelic now. It's a rainbow of flavor!

Slide 20: Finally, we feature this mixed media masterpiece. Butter Boy's teeth are cut out and a yellow post it note is used to butter his bread!

Slide 21: The coloring book pages for this year were taken from a new rare book collection, the complete series of L. Frank Baum's Wizard of Oz books. This coloring book is also available on the NY Academy of Medicine Library's website.

Slide 22: My thanks to Jessica Eichlin, Lemley Mullet, Miriam Cady and Sally Brown for submitting their coloring pages for this presentation. Thanks also go to Jessica Eichlin and Lemley Mullet for selecting the images and putting the coloring book together for the 2020 and 2022 submission.

Slide 23: Thank you! I hope you'll enjoy coloring!