BLUE: COLOR & CONCEPT
on view at Beinecke Library
January 21–April 19, 2014

LIBRARIES CONVENTIONALLY organize and classify collections according to author, title, and subjects as diverse as children’s literature, amateur photography, Harlem Renaissance poetry, and experimental film. This exhibition reveals what can occur if alternative methods for navigating an archive are employed. “Blue: Color and Concept” tracks a single idea across the Beinecke’s holdings and over numerous fields in order to reveal a rich network of associations. The result is a unique cultural history of the color blue in nineteenth- and twentieth-century arts and letters. “Blue” brings together literary and historical artifacts—the poet Langston Hughes’s blue enamel-decorated cigarette case and a hand-colored nineteenth-century family photograph, writer Edith Wharton’s 1915 Paris driver’s permit and an American driver’s guidebook from the same era—alongside great works in fields as varied as entomology, poetry, human psychology, and American popular music. The exhibition demonstrates ways alternative approaches to thinking about archival research can expose dense systems of meaningful connection and material association overlooked by more traditional modes of inquiry. Apparent and subtle reflections and echoes throughout the exhibition reveal new categories of significance and new ways of seeing and understanding well-known texts and archival objects. “Blue” explores aesthetic ideas and quotidian practices, moods and music, texts and textures, displaying an unexpected view of the Beinecke’s collections.

— Nancy Kuhl, Curator of Poetry, Yale Collection of American Literature

**Glass tower, main entryway**

1 Blueprints

Amusement park attractions: blueprints, plans, and building permits for Coney Island and other locations, United States: circa 1918–1964.

Featuring an arcade, miniature golf course, elephant track, and the Roll-O-Plane on Coney Island; the Witching Waves in Euclid Beach Park, Cleveland, Ohio; and other attractions. (BrSides Elephant Folio 2013 7)

*Because of their extreme light sensitivity, the materials exhibited here are largely vinyl facsimiles; framed blueprints are originals.*

**Glass tower, south side**

2 Swell, Swale, Swash

Paintings and collages by Susan Howe.

*Chart Number 3; Corner Bed; Scroll Meander; Swell and Swale; Collage; Harry Avery’s Castle; Swash, 1958, 1968-73.* (YCAL MSS 338, Folders 23, 24, 29, 30)

**Table case, south side**

3 Blue: Color and Concept

Books, literary manuscripts, photographs, sheet music, realia, and industrial manuals.


Women of the Peralta Family, hand-colored ambrotype photograph, undated. (WA Photos 402, Box 17)


Enamelled cigarette case with an engraved message from Carl Van Vechten to Langston Hughes. (JWJ MSS 26.635.14246)


Edward Higgins Williams, *Photograph Album of Extramorainic Deposits in Eastern Pennsylvania*, 1894. (GEN MSS 1038)

Richard Wright, “Blue Black Blues,” manuscript drafts, undated. (JWJ MSS 3.84.962)

4 W. C. Handy: Father of the Blues

Music manuscripts, drawings, sheet music, and books documenting Handy’s life and work.

Miguel Covarrubias, *Caricature of W.C. Handy*, inscribed to Langston Hughes by Handy, undated. (JWJ MSS 26.584.13904a)

*Works by W.C. Handy*


*The Jogo Blues, NY: Pace & Handy Music Co., c1913.* (JW Sheet Music JW V3 H19 159)

*The Hesitating Blues, NY: Pace & Handy Music Co., c1915.* (JW V3 H19 H46)

*The Yellow Dog Blues, NY: Pace & Handy Music Co., c1919.* (JW Sheet Music V3 H19 Y38)


*The St. Louis Blues, NY: Pace & Handy, after 1921, c1914.* (JWJ V1 +1)
5 Insects and Butterflies
Prints from E.A. Séguy’s Insectes and Papillons.

6 Blue Movie
Blue Movie, Munich: Constantin-Film, circa 1972. (Zab W232 M1972A; BrSides Double Folio 2013 62)

7 Blue Beyond “The Blues”
Jazz, folk, and rock records by John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, and Lou Reed, 1950s-1980s. Materials exhibited are not from the Beinecke Library Collections.
John Coltrane, Blue Train, Blue Note Records, 1957.
Miles Davis, Kind of Blue, Columbia Records, 1959.

8 Langston Hughes, Blues Poet
Photographs and manuscripts from the Langston Hughes Papers; broadside collaborations between Hughes and artist Aaron Douglas; copies of Hughes’s works, including his personally marked copy of Fine Clothes to the Jew, which the poet used for readings.
Photograph of Langston Hughes, Chicago, Grand Hotel, February, 1942. (JWJ MSS 26.454.10967)
The Weary Blues, NY: A.A. Knopf, 1926. (JWZ Zan H874 926 Copy 2)
The Weary Blues music manuscript, undated. (JWJ MSS 26.367.5929)
Fine Clothes to the Jew, NY: A.A. Knopf, 1927. Two copies, including Hughes’s copy marked for performance and inscribed to the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection. (JWZ Zan H874 927f Copy 2 and JWJ Zan H874 927fc)
With Aaron Douglas, “Hard Luck” and “Bound No’th Blues” from Six Poems, NY, 1926. (JWZ ZZan H874 926H)
“Winter Morning Blues” manuscript, undated. (JWJ MSS 26.401.8085)
“Harlem River Blues” manuscript, undated. (JWJ MSS 26.378.6479)
“Simple’s Blues” manuscript lyrics and music, undated. (JWJ MSS 26.399.7900 & 7901)

9 Blue Books for Boys and Girls
Primers, storybooks, toy books, and other nineteenth-century works for children principally from the Betsy Beinecke Shirley Collection of American Children’s Literature.
(Call Numbers for books in the Betsy Beinecke Shirley Collection: Shirley, followed by the title number indicated below in parentheses.)
A Quarrel Settled in a Pleasant Manner, New Haven: S. Babcock, Sidney’s Press, 1830. (1924 t1 Volume 1)
Flowers for a Juvenile Garland, New Haven: S. Babcock, 1840. (4045)
The Sailor Boy, or, The First and Last Voyage of Little Andrew, Concord, NH: Rufus Merrill and Co., 1843. (5401)
Mother Goose’s Melody, Concord, NH: Rufus Merrill, 1843. (4921)
The Union ABC, Boston: Degen, Estes & Company, 23 Cornhill, circa 1864. (8287)
Rhymes for the Nursery, Concord, NH: R. Merrill, 1843. (5469)
Master Henry’s Arrival, and The Alarm, NY: Merriam & Moore., 1851. (5503)
The Renowned History of Sir Richard Whittington, and His Cat, New Haven: Sidney’s Press, 1818. (1924 t1 Volume 1)
Lyman Cobb, Little Stories about the Watch, Clock, Globe, Ink-Stand, Pen, Slate, Cradle and Anchor: In Words of One and Two Syllables, Newark: Benjamin Olds & Son, 1846. (5437)
The History of Insects, Portland, ME: Bailey & Noyes, circa 1860. (5599)
John Greene Chandler, Remarkable Story of Chicken Little, Roxbury, MA: J.G. Chandler, 1840. (5227)
The History of Whittington and his Cat, NY: John McLoughlin, 1854. (4776)
The Christmas Primer: Designed as a Present for Children Who Wish to Learn, NY: George F. Coolege, 1843. (2409)
The Snow Drop, Northampton, MA: E. Turner, between 1828 and 1843. (5446)
The Beacon; or Warnings to Thoughtless Boys, NY: Kiggins & Kellogg, between 1836 and 1837. (4610)
The Pride of Peter Prim, or, Proverbs That Will Suit the Young or the Old, NY: H. & E. Phinney, 1841. (5513)
The Lion’s Den, Philadelphia: W. Johnson, 1832. (Zm L661)
Riddle Book: for the Entertainment of Boys and Girls, New Haven: Sidney’s Press, 1825. (1924 t1 Volume 1)
The Little Riddler, Worcester, MA: J. Grout, Jr., 1845-46. (4665)
A Riddle Book, Concord, NH: R. Merrill., 1843. (4683)
Rhymes for the Nursery, NY: Kiggins & Kellogg, between 1858 and 1866. (4850)

*The Picture Book, or, Familiar Objects Described*, New Haven: S. Babcock, circa 1842. (5478)

*The Little Book of Trades: Describing Some Plain Things*, New Haven: S. Babcock, circa 1840. (4992)

*The Affecting Story of Mary Davis: To Which Are Added, The Pelican, and The Twin Sisters: Three Cents for a Book of Such a Large Size, I’m Sure it Doth Seem a Very Fine Prize*, NY: Mahlon Day; 1830. (5090)

*The Folly of Finery; or, History of Mary Lawson*, NY: Mahlon Day & Co., between 1839 and 1845. (4649)

*Travelers Mounted upon Curious and Wonderful Animals*, NY: S.M. Crane, 1847. (5413)

*The Two Goats and the Sick Monkey*, Portland, ME: Bailey & Noyes., not before 1860. (5414)

*The Blue Pictorial Primer: Designed for the Use of Schools and Families*, NY: Geo. F. Coolidge & Brother, between 1844 and 1871. (2398)

*Tom Brice, the News-Boy; or, Honesty Rewarded*, NY: T.W. Strong, 1862. (8285)


*The Instructive History of Industry and Sloth*, New Haven: Sidney’s Press, 1810. (Is94 t1 Volume 1)

### 10 Cyanotype Photographs

Images of Alaska, Washington, Wisconsin, and California; the 1901 Paris World’s Fair; American utopian communities; and Western railroads. Featured photographers include Anne Brigman, Irene Hood, Charles Fletcher Lummis, and Peter Newell. Due to their extreme light sensitivity, exhibited materials will change several times during the course of the exhibition.

**Albums**

Mount Rainier, Washington, and Alaska, circa 1893-1898. (WA Photos 101)

Irene Elizabeth Jerome Hood, landscape and floral studies in Colorado, 1908. (WA Photos 500)

Tuleta Hills and Green Lake County, Wisconsin, July 1906. (GEN MSS 1008)

**Photographs**

Charles Fletcher Lummis, photographs of Redlands and San Diego, California, circa 1890-1900. (WA Photos 452)

Peter Newell, photographs of the Paris World’s Fair, 1901. (YCAL MSS 62.18 & 9)

Photographs of American utopian communities, principally in California, various dates; collected by Paul Kagan. (WA MSS S 1737.15.272)

Photographs of Western railroads, undated. (WA Photos File, Series 11)

Unidentified snapshots from the archives of Katherine Dreier and Sinclair Lewis. (YCAL MSS 101.75.1922; YCAL MSS 268.54.771)

Anne Brigman, photographic postcard to Alfred Stieglitz, undated. From the Alfred Stieglitz/Georgia O’Keeffe Papers. (YCAL MSS 85.149.2780)

Photograph of Bernard Berenson, undated. From the Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas Papers. (YCAL MSS 76.153.3753a)

Photograph of Thornton Wilder’s pony, undated. From the Thornton Wilder Papers. (YCAL MSS 162.15.263)

**Glass tower, north side**

#### 11 Pearl Primus, Hard Time Blues

Photographs of Pearl Primus by Carl Van Vechten.

Carl Van Vechten, Pearl Primus dancing “Hard Time Blues,” October 11, 1943; printed from original color slides at the Beinecke Library Digital Studio. (JWJ MSS Vechten Color Slides)

**Table case, north side**

#### 12 Blue: Color and Concept

Books, advertising ephemera, photographs, sheet music, personal papers, comic books, and industrial manuals.


*Blue Beetle*, Derby, CT: Charlton Comics Group, 1960s. (1977 Folio s64)


Joseph Dixon Crucible Company Catalogs, Jersey City, NJ, 1885-1925. (Uai +D445)


R.R. Hinman, *The Blue Laws of New Haven Colony, Usually Called Blue Laws of Connecticut; Quaker Laws of Plymouth and Massachusetts... Comp. by an Antiquarian*, Hartford, CT: Case, Tiffany & Co., 1838. (Vanderbilt 72)

Canson and Montgolfier, 23 Examples of the Use of Color in Modern Advertising, NY: Canson & Montgolfier, 1928. (Uai C166)

Confederate twenty-dollar bill, 1860s. (YCAL MSS 202.16.198)


Motor vehicle permit for Edith Wharton, Paris, France, 1915. (YCAL MSS 42.51.1538)


Blanche Matthias, Hand-colored photographs from travels in China and Japan, 1917. (YCAL MSS 45.7.163)
Little Blue Books
Sale catalogs, marketing ephemera, and numerous volumes from the Haldeman-Julius “Little Blue Books” series, published in Girard, Kansas.

(Call Numbers for Little Blue Books: 1977 S85, followed by volume number in the series, indicated below in parentheses.)

Little Blue Books sales catalogs and promotional materials, 1920s.

Omar Khayyam, Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, 1924. (1)
Donald Coveyou, Standard Games of Solitaire, after 1922. (1747)
Great English Poems/Edited with Introduction and Notes by Nelson Antrim Crawford, c1924. (9)
Henry James, Daisy Miller, after 1923. (182)
Washington Irving, Rip Van Winkle and Other Tales, after 1923. (57)
Michael Gold, Life of John Brown, c1924. (521)
Maurice Maeterlinck, Pellias and Melisande, 1923 or 1924. (31)
Niccolò Machiavelli, The Prince, c1922. (320)
Edward Lear, A Book of Nonsense Alphabets: With Drawings by the Author, after 1922. (1173)
J.M. Barrie, A Tillyloss Scandal, after 1922. (307)
Hélène Paquin, How to Make All Kinds of Candy, c1927. (518)
Isaac Goldberg, Dante: An Aesthetic View, c1923. (422)
Euripides, Hippolytus; A Tragedy, c1924. (502)
Maynard Shipley, Hypnotism Made Plain, c1924. (92)
The Buddhist Philosophy of Life, c1922. (322)
Margaret Sanger, What Every Girl Should Know, after 1923. (14)
Book of Synonyms, after 1923. (192)
Arthur Davison Ficke, Sonnets of a Portrait-Painter; Together with Two Other Sonnet Sequences, c1925. (846)
Euripides, Electra, c1924. (560)
A Book of Humorous Limericks, c1926. (1018)
Havelock Ellis, The Love Rights of Women, 1923 or 1924. (203)
Guy de Maupassant, Love, and Other Stories, after 1923. (6)
Rudyard Kipling, The Man Who Would Be King, after 1923. (151)
Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes Mystery Stories, after 1922. (1027)
William J. Fielding, Psychoanalysis: The Key to Human Behavior, c1924. (190)
Sophocles, King Oedipus, c1924. (511)
Lloyd E. Smith, Bluebeard, Cinderella, and Other Tales, c1925. (836)
Jules Verne, A Voyage to the Moon, c1923. (485)
Lloyd E. Smith, A Dictionary of Classical Mythology, c1924. (499)
Remy de Gourmont, Stories in Yellow, Black, White, Blue, Violet and Red, c1924. (540)
Max Beerbohm, The Happy Hypocrite, after 1922. (595)
Leo Markun, How to Think Creatively, after 1922. (1726)
John Keats, Poems, c1923. (427)
John Cowper Powys, One Hundred Best Books, c1923. (435)
Mother Goose: An Anthology, c1924. (716)
1924 Republican and Democratic Platforms, 1924. (A1000)

G.K. Chesterton, Essays, after 1922. (235)
John W. Gunn, Life of Thomas Jefferson, c1924. (769)
Ralph Waldo Emerson, Essays on Spiritual Laws; Circles, after 1922. (547)
Charles J. Finger, A Book of Strange Murders, c1925. (819)
Henrik Ibsen, Hedda Gabler, after 1922. (350)
United States, US Constitution and Declaration of Independence; and the Monroe Doctrine, after 1922. (687)
Vance Randolph, Freud on Sleep and Sexual Dreams, c1925. (804)
Lloyd E. Smith, 4000 Words Often Mispronounced, c1925. (697)
Leo Markun, Your Intelligence and How to Test It, after 1922. (1439)
Maxim Gorky, My Fellow-Traveler; The Story of a Journey, after 1922. (389)
Lloyd E. Smith, Little Lessons in Vocabulary Building, after 1922. (1365)
Thomas Carlyle, On the Choice of Books, c1924. (75)
Rudyard Kipling, Black Jack and Other Stories, 1925. (913)
Archibald Alexander, Kant’s Critical Philosophy, c1924. (571)
Dante Gabriel Rossetti, The House of Life: A Sonnet Sequence, c1925. (781)
George Bernard Shaw, Socialism for Millionaires, after 1923. (135)
John Hugh Bowers, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, c1923. (341)
Walt Whitman, Poems, c1924. (73)
Maynard Shipley, Electricity and Life, c1924. (722)
Ramsden Balmforth, Evolution vs. Religion, after 1923. (191)
William Shakespeare, Hamlet, after 1922. (246)
Plato, The Republic, c1922. (157)
Lloyd E. Smith, Card Games and How to Play Them, c1925. (847)
Annie Wood Besant, Marriage: Its Past, Present and Future, after 1923. (83)
Oscar Wilde, A Woman of No Importance, after 1922. (376)
Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland, 1923 or 1924. (158)
Charles J. Finger, The Gist of Burton’s Anatomy of Melancholy, c1924. (765)
Proverbs of Ireland, 1923 or 1924. (119)
Lloyd E. Smith, How to Improve Your Conversation, c1927. (307)
Alfred Tennyson, In Memoriam, after 1922. (404)

Robert Henri’s Blues
Materials from the Robert Henri Papers.

Featuring notebooks, pigment samples, and writings from the 1920s. (YCAL MSS 100 Boxes 25 & 26)
15 Ethel Waters, “Queen of the Blues”
Photographs, sheet music, printed ephemera, clippings, and Waters’s autobiography, *His Eye Is on the Sparrow.*

Three early stage photographs of Ethel Waters, inscribed to Carl Van Vechten, founder of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection of American Negro Arts and Letters, undated. (JWJ MSS 76.11.135)


Broadside advertisement for Broadway production of *Cabin in the Sky,* 1940. (BrSides Box 2013 94)


Carl Van Vechten, Ethel Waters in *Cabin in the Sky,* 1940; printed from an original color slide at the Beinecke Library Digital Studio. (JWV Van Vechten Color Slides)

Program, invitation, and newspaper clipping for Ethel Waters in *Blue Holiday,* 1945. (JWV MSS 89.172.Waters 1940s)


Carl Van Vechten, Ruby Hill in *St. Louis Woman,* July 2, 1946; printed from an original color slides at the Beinecke Library Digital Studio. (JWV Van Vechten Color Slides)

Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer, *Blues Opera* script, circa 1957. (YCAL MSS 795)

Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer, *Free and Easy* script, circa 1959. (YCAL MSS 795)

17 Blue Bindings
Decorated book bindings from the Lisa and Leonard Baskin Collection.

(Call Numbers for books in the Lisa and Leonard Baskin Collection: Baskin, followed by the title number indicated below in parentheses.)


Milton Reed, *A Roving He Would Go: From the Southern Cross to the Arctic Circle,* Boston: Sherman, French & Company, 1910. (603)

Maurice Maeterlinck, *The Light Beyond,* NY: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1917. (479)

Amelia Edith Huddleston Barr, *A Border Shepherdess,* NY: Dodd, Mead and Company, c1887. (71)


A.M. Buckton, *The Burden of Engel,* London: Methuen, 1904. (123)

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust,* NY: A.L. Burt, 1890s. (299)

*The Wedding Day in Literature and Art,* NY: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1902. (157)

H.C. Bunner, *Jersey Street and Jersey Lane,* NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1896. (130)


Maud Howe Elliott, *Two in Italy,* Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1905. (362)

Frederick Marryat, *Jacob Faithful,* NY: Macmillan and Co., 1895. (486)

*The Secret of Fougereuse: A Romance of the Fifteenth Century,* Boston: Marlier, Callahan & Co., 1898. (314)


Laura Elizabeth Howe Richards, *Mrs. Tree’s Will,* Boston: Dana Estes & Company, c1907. (624)


Andrew Lang, *The Book of Dreams and Ghosts,* NY: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1897. (420)

John Kelman, *From Damascus to Palmyra,* London: Adam and Charles Black, 1908. (393)

16 A Blues Opera
Books, manuscripts, notes, photographs, and printed ephemera documenting the evolution of Arna Bontemps’s novel *God Sends Sunday* as adapted for the stage in productions titled *St. Louis Woman, Blues Opera,* and *Free and Easy.*


Arna Bontemps, *God Sends Sunday* (play), undated manuscripts & typescripts. (JWV MSS 6.2.37 & 6.2.38)

Langston Hughes, draft prologue to *St. Louis Woman.* (JWV MSS 6.2.40)

*St. Louis Woman* playbill, Nashville Community Playhouse, 1952. (JWV MSS 6.2.47)

Countee Cullen, lyrics for *St. Louis Woman,* circa 1944. (JWV MSS 77)


*St. Louis Woman* playbill, New York, 1946. (JWV MSS 6.2.47)

Carl Van Vechten, Pearl Bailey in *St. Louis Woman,* July 5, 1946; printed from an original color slides at the Beinecke Library Digital Studio. (JWV Van Vechten Color Slides)
The New Orleans “Blue Book”

Late nineteenth-century photographic directory of the city of New Orleans, “Blue Book” directories to the city’s brothels, and examples of E. J. Bellocq’s portraits of prostitutes in Storyville, New Orleans.


Blue Book, New Orleans, 1905-1915. (Zc22 B625)

E. J. Bellocq, Portraits of prostitutes in Storyville, New Orleans. Photographs created by E. J. Bellocq circa 1910-1915 and printed from his negatives by an unidentified printer, probably in 1950. (YCAL MSS 732)