

**UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL
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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

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Doctoral Dissertation Defense

Abstract

Beyond the Surface:
Early American Patriotic Material Culture, 1780-1865

by

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Historians have long known that the nineteenth-century United States witnessed significant innovation in printing technologies, but the implications of printing innovations for material culture have been less well understood. Improved printing, faster manufacturing of objects, and expanding shipping routes provided consumers with a wide array of options to express themselves and their opinions on important social and political issues of the time. Organized chronologically and thematically, this dissertation examines the methods and technologies of image-making on ceramics, scrimshaw, and stationery materials. Like galleries in a museum, each chapter features a discrete set of artifacts and puts their producers and consumers into historical context. The dissertation as a whole illuminates and questions the significant continuities in the patriotic imagery that adorned the artifacts.

Even though the items examined are categorized as expressions of “the nation,” they were not bound by geography. In many ways, image-making technologies on material objects are international in scope. The objects and illustrations used reflect historical biases due to what was preserved and limited provenance records. However, the lack of diverse representation did not mean a lack of diversity among the objects’ creators and owners. Women, African Americans, and other racial and ethnic minorities also made, purchased, used, and gifted the types of items examined. Although the visual iconography of patriotism involved significant continuities over time, the material expressions of Columbia changed in significant ways, expanding beyond the geographic and socio-economic borders within which historians have typically understood it.

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ZOOM: <https://fiu.zoom.us/j/3053482803>

Department: History

Major Professor: Dr. Kirsten Wood