

Resources for Teaching Thrift

To help teachers create their own curriculum, HSP offers a variety of resources for classroom use. From primary sources to video, teachers can shape lessons and students can do their own research.

Primary Sources

Sara L. Oberholtzer was the Superintendent of the School Savings Banks, a program of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Her son, a Philadelphia historian, left her papers to HSP in the 1930s. Today these materials form one of the largest archived collections about the historical thrift movement in the United States. The [inventory of this collection](#) ^[1] illustrates the diversity of sources, from political cartoons and deposit cards to bank association reports and foreign-language treatises.

To aid in classroom teaching, many of these materials have been placed in HSP's Digital Library:

- One gallery features materials about the [thrift movement](#) ^[2] in general.
- The other has sources specific to [School Savings Banks](#) ^[3].

Teachers can purchase reproductions of the digitized materials for use in their classrooms through following these instructions.

Secondary Sources

For a background in the historical thrift movement as well as thoughts on how the movement relates to our lives today, the articles of the [Fall 2012 *Pennsylvania Legacies*](#) ^[4] issue provide fodder for teacher reflection or secondary student reading. The issue covers:

- The development of savings banks in the 19th century, specifically focusing on the social and cultural context of their development;
- The tension between thrift and the rising consumer culture in the late 19th and early 20th century through the lens of the *Ladies' Home Journal* under the editorship of Edward Bok;
- The thrift movement in Pennsylvania from the early 20th century;
- Thrift as it relates to the stewardship and conservation of our natural resources;
- "Food for Thought" article written by Jeremy Nowak, president and CEO of the William Penn Foundation, based upon his keynote address at National Thrift Week 2012;
- "Teacher's Turn" and "Teacher's Page" providing curricular support;
- Book and website reviews.

In addition, teachers can access [video](#) ^[5] and [audio](#) ^[6] of "Is Thrift Good for America?" This debate was held at HSP on August 1, 2012. Princeton historian Sheldon Garon, author of *Beyond Our Means: Why America Spends While the World Saves*, and Rutgers historian James

Livingston, author of *Against Thrift: Why Consumer Culture Is Good for the Economy, the Environment and Your Soul*, argue their respective cases for and against thrift. The conversation was moderated by David Blankenhorn, president of the Institute for American Values [7].

Links

- [1] https://hsp.org/sites/default/files/thrift__inventory_revised_0713.pdf
- [2] http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/simpleGalleryEdu/Show/displaySet/set_id/294
- [3] http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/simpleGalleryEdu/Show/displaySet/set_id/295
- [4] <https://hsp.org/publications/pennsylvania-legacies/the-value-of-thrift>
- [5] <http://centerforpublicconversation.org/events/v/thrift-america-20120801.php>
- [6] <https://hsp.org/history-online/media-library/audio/is-thrift-good-for-america>
- [7] <http://americanvalues.org>