COMPETITION GENERAL RESEARCH
FUND FY 2013

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Last, First M.I.

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DEPARTMENT: Libraries  CHAIRPERSON: Dean Lorraine Haricombe

PROJECT TITLE: Windowshield decalcomania: A preservation study

STATUS: ☒ New  ☐ Renewal/Continuation (Special justification must be attached)

KEY WORDS (Provide up to 50 characters maximum that describes your project in disciplinary, subdisciplinary terms.) Decalcomania, ephemera, preservation, preventive conservation
I. SUMMARY OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES (1 page maximum). This summary must explain what is to be done and its significance in a manner intelligible to any faculty member, regardless of discipline.

In 2010 I began researching the history, manufacture, and preservation of the bumper sticker. I am now broadening this work to include a class of ephemera with a similar purpose, yet substantially different composition: windowshield decalcomania, the water-sensitive, paper-based transfers placed on the windows of automobiles. This proposal centers on a research trip to the Cincinnati Historical Society to examine business records of the Palm Brothers Decalcomania Company—arguably the first American producer of these transfer products—to determine how decalcomania, developed by the ceramics industry, evolved for private use on automobile windowshields. The eventual outcomes will be a peer-reviewed publication (also shared through open access channels) and scholarly and popular presentations to disseminate the history, manufacture, and preservation of automobile-related ephemeral materials, focusing on how they are integral to the study of American tourism, cultural, and political life.
II. RESEARCH PLAN, SUPPORTING DATA, AND PROPOSED TIME SCHEDULE: Please note PAGE LIMITATION of **five (5) pages**.

III. CURRICULUM VITAE OF APPLICANT (to be attached): Please note maximum page limitation of **TWO (2) PAGES** emphasizing the recent record of the applicant.

IV. FUTURE SOURCES OF FUNDING

A. Has this project or its substantial equivalent already been submitted to another agency for support? If so, please give name of agency, title of project, amount, and names of all co-investigators.
   Applied for the Philip Jones Fellowship, Ephemera Society of America. $1000 award; will hear circa March 1, 2012. When submitting my application I was informed that the ESA received a record number of applicants, so competition is stiff.

B. Are there other sources, prospects, or plans for future support for this project or its substantial equivalent? Be specific about your plans for application, agencies, and time schedule.
   No

V. PROGRESS ON PAST GENERAL RESEARCH FUND APPLICATIONS

A. If you were awarded General Research Fund Allocations in the past, please give account numbers for the **two most recent allocations**:
   (For past account numbers you can contact Patti Steffan - psteffan@ku.edu)

   AccountNumber: 2301483
   Title: The bumper sticker: Preserving the message
   $ Amount: 1864

   AccountNumber:  
   Title:  
   $ Amount: 

B. Total number of awards provided by General Research Fund

   Total # of Awards: 1
   # of Awards received for current “Titled” project: 0

C. LIST results of all past General Research Fund Allocations in terms of publications, proposals, grants and contracts for outside support. **Please list publications in bibliographic format. Attach list**


Extensive publicity in the popular press (selected below):

1. Research Matters, KU: on radio Feb 13, 14, and 18, 2011 and on KU YouTube channel.
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uF0-uUXZMU
2. KUJH (University of Kansas TV station), interview aired February 17, 2011:
3. Channel 6 (local Lawrence, KS TV), aired February 18, 2011:
6. USA Today state news feature, February 22, 2011 page 9A
7. KJHK (University of Kansas radio), As Heard from the Hill radio program, March 1, 2011:
9. Interview with Silja Hurskainen, reporter for Tekniikan Maailma, a Finnish magazine focusing on technology and automobiles, for story on bumper stickers, published later in 2012.

VI. CURRENT RESEARCH SUPPORT
A. Please identify all current research support, including the source, amount, title of the project and the period.

   The previous GRF, listed above, has been carried over two years by Libraries Administration (not at my request, as a matter of course). I have $117 left in the fund for photoduplication costs; all travel monies have been expended.

B. To what extent does this request duplicate or supplement your presently funded research or the research program of a collaborator?

   Not at all.
VII. UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH PROJECT. This Page and any approvals are required! Enclose approvals, if applicable. Every applicant must complete one of these forms for each application set.

1. **Human Subjects**
   a. Does this project involve human subjects (includes interviews, questionnaires, surveys and observations)?
      
      | Yes | No |
      |-----|----|
      |     |   x|

   b. If Yes, have you applied for approval from the Human Subjects Committee?
      (HSCL, 864-7429)

      | Yes | No |
      |-----|----|
      |     |   x|

c. Have you received approval? (If Yes, attach the approval)

      | Yes | No |
      |-----|----|
      |     |   x|

2. **Animal Research**
   a. Does the project involve animals?   
      Yes ☐   No ☒

   b. If Yes, have you applied for approval from the Animal Care Committee?
      (Jodi Jones, IACUC, 864-8841)

      | Yes | No |
      |-----|----|
      |     |   x|

c. Have you received approval? (If Yes, attach the approval)

      | Yes | No |
      |-----|----|
      |     |   x|

3. **Radiation Safety**
   a. Does the project involve radiation sources (includes x-rays, radioisotopes etc.)?  
      Yes ☐   No ☒

   b. If Yes, have you applied for approval from the Radiation Safety Committee?
      (Contact the Environment, Health & Safety Office, 4-4089)

      | Yes | No |
      |-----|----|
      |     |   x|

c. Have you received approval? (If Yes, attach the approval)

      | Yes | No |
      |-----|----|
      |     |   x|

4. **Kansas Ecological Reserves**
   a. Does the project involve Kansas Ecological Reserves?  
      Yes ☐   No ☒

   b. If Yes, have you applied for approval from the Director of the Kansas Biological Survey?
      (Ed Martinko, 864-7770)

      | Yes | No |
      |-----|----|
      |     |   x|

c. Have you received approval? (If Yes, attach the approval)

      | Yes | No |
      |-----|----|
      |     |   x|

5. **Biohazards**
   a. Does the project involve Recombinant DNA or other biohazardous materials? Yes ☐   No ☒

   b. If Yes, have you applied for approval from the Institutional Biosafety Committee?
      (contact the Environment, Health & Safety Office, 4-4089)

      | Yes | No |
      |-----|----|
      |     |   x|

c. Have you received approval? (If Yes, attach the approval)

      | Yes | No |
      |-----|----|
      |     |   x|

6. **Blood-borne Pathogens**
   a. Will you or any member of your research staff be exposed to any blood-borne pathogens? Yes ☐   No ☒

      If Yes, please explain:

Final approval of any allocation will be contingent upon applicant’s compliance with the above University regulations.
## Competition GRF Budget - FY 2013

**Budget Period:** 07/01/12 - 6/30/13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel:</th>
<th>Budget Request</th>
<th>Committee Recommendation</th>
<th>Final Allocation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal Investigator, salary requested* (4 wk maximum)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fringe Benefits of faculty salary x 28%</td>
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<td>Graduate Research Assistant(s)*</td>
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<td>Fringe Benefits of GRA x 4%</td>
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<td>Student Hourly(s)*</td>
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<td>Fringe Benefits of student salary x 4%</td>
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<td>Post Doc(s)</td>
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<td>28% of faculty salary/Post Doc</td>
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### Salary and Fringe Totals

| Salary and Fringe Totals | 0 |

### Consumable Materials (itemize below):

| Photoduplication costs | 100 |

**Total Consumable Materials**

### Travel for Research:

| In-state travel: | 0 |
| Out-of-state travel: | 1620 |
| Foreign travel: | 0 |

**Total Travel for Research**

### Other Costs (itemize below):

**Total Other Costs**

| Total Other Costs | 0 |

**GRAND TOTAL BUDGET**

| GRAND TOTAL BUDGET | 1720 |

* Payroll appointments must be between 6/10/12 and on or before the final payroll date for FY 2013

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Budget Checked by department accounting/payroll staff sign: __________________________

- Curriculum vitae attached
- Approvals for University Regulations for Research Projects attached, if appropriate
- Period of salary request conforms to budget instructions

Signature of Applicant

Approved: Signature of Chairperson

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FY13 Competition GRF 7

11/11
Research Plan

Automobile-related ephemera are inextricably tied to the history of the United States. Americans' post-war obsession with the automobile and the freedom it afforded fueled the popularity of windowshield decalcomania and, later, bumper stickers. Documenting a wide range of historical and social phenomena --such as tourist attractions, public safety initiatives, political campaigns, radio and television stations, and political and personal viewpoints--decal and stickers present a microcosm of American popular culture in the 20th century.

Ephemera--defined as paper-based, printed material manufactured for a one-time or short-term purpose--sometimes escape notice of the conservator and curator. In particular, ephemera from the 20th century and later may be too recent to appear interesting or worth collecting. As a result, manufacturing histories and possible chemical and physical instabilities have not been significantly studied or represented in the conservation literature, and preservation protocols and best practices have not yet been developed. The purpose of my research is study how ephemera were made and how they degrade and decay. A secondary goal is to foster an enthusiasm and respect for such materials, with the hope that they will be better preserved. Decalcomania, commonly known as "decals," were invented in France in the early to mid 1700s as a method of transferring designs onto a surface like ceramics or glass. The decalcomania themselves were printed on pieces of paper that, when wet, would transfer to another surface. There are two main types of decal papers, simplex and duplex, that describe different systems of exposing the water-soluble adhesive that is moistened in decal application.

I am interested in learning about the types of paper, adhesives, and printing used to produce decals in order to develop preservation protocol for these objects. An early step in this research, the subject of this funding proposal, is to focus on manufacturing techniques of decals. The first decalcomania firm in the United States was the Palm Brothers Decalcomania Company, established in 1868 in Cincinnati, Ohio. Fortunately for scholars, the business and financial files for this company are preserved at the Cincinnati Historical Society--29 boxes in all, with additional supporting collections on decalcomania in the same institution. If awarded a General Research Fund grant, I would use the funds to travel to Cincinnati for a week and study these collections. While there I would also visit the Cincinnati-Hamilton County Public Library Genealogy and Local History Department, which has additional decalcomania records not available anywhere else (and more flexible hours than the Cincinnati Historical Society).

Once I determine as much as possible about the manufacture of decalcomania by delving into primary business records and other literature, I will spend time examining historic decalcomania in research institutions in order to record as much information as possible about their components and how they are deteriorating. I will follow protocol developed in the fall of 2010 when I examined over two thousand bumper stickers in seven cultural heritage institutions to document physical characteristics and condition. I have found that there is no substitute for examination of physical artifacts; they provide many additional details about how they were made and how they have aged. The Microsoft Access-based survey and
accompanying research revealed trends in the development, evolution, and deterioration of bumper stickers; a similar outcome can be predicted for the decalcomania project.

When thorough research is completed, I plan to publish a scholarly article on the history, manufacture, and preservation of decalcomania, with the aim of communicating the importance of preserving these artifacts. Such information would be vital to those of us at KU interested in preserving ephemeral collections in archives, libraries, and museums on campus, but would also be widely valuable to the larger, national, cultural heritage communities, most of whom rely on conservators and our professional literature to inform decisions in caring for collections, because they lack resources to hire institutional conservators to perform such research. My aim would be to complete research and writing by 2014. I also hope to present my findings to museum, archives, and preservation groups, so that those in positions to lengthen the lives of collected material recognize the importance of doing so. Another goal would be to reach out to private collectors in order to create a dialogue: I would like to know why decalcomania are collected, and collectors would receive more information on how to preserve them.

**Research Timeline**

1. Research in Cincinnati, OH (6 days/7 nights, summer or fall 2013)

   Foundational research with primary materials. Travel to and from Cincinnati; researching at the Cincinnati Historical Society during five business days plus Saturday. Evening research at the Cincinnati-Hamilton County Public Library.

2. Examination of decalcomania in research collections (fall 2013-spring 2014)

   Research and survey will take place in library, museum, and archival collections. Previous research on decals gathered during bumper sticker research will be folded into the database.

3. Write scholarly publication (summer 2014)

   Prepare an article for a peer-reviewed journal on history, manufacture, and preservation of decalcomania suitable for library/archives/museum professionals. As a strong supporter of open access initiatives, I will make my scholarly output available through KU's ScholarWorks digital repository.
Post-grant period

Based on published findings, I also intend to prepare and present at least one scholarly paper at a national professional conference on the manufacture and care of pressure-sensitive ephemera.

Summary of costs

Note: I am quite familiar with Cincinnati, having lived an hour away in Kentucky for a few years. The Cincinnati Historical Society is housed in a museum complex in the former train station. The area is not rich in hotels; the closest nearby location is the downtown area. After consulting an acquaintance who lives in Cincinnati, I have researched hotel costs at safe areas in downtown. Travel costs are based on estimated airfare costs as a comparison rate, per University of Kansas travel regulations. Additional costs include per diem and funds for photocopying (neither library allows digital cameras in the reading room; copies are 25 cents per page --I will try to type as much as possible, but time constraints often require some degree of photoduplication to use resources later).

Round-trip travel: $400
(planes to Cincy are expensive)

Airport shuttle (two ways) $40

6 nights in a hotel (incl tax) $900

Per diem $40/day x 6 days $240

Taxi around town $40

Photoduplication costs $100

Total $1720