

Strategy and Priorities for Cataloging the National Woman's Party Collection

On March 16, 2009, the advisory committee met to discuss the *Metadata Guidelines for Museum Cataloging* and to develop the strategy and priorities for cataloging the NWP collection at the Sewall-Belmont House and Museum. This project is intended to support the cataloging of approximately 500-750 objects representing a cross-section of the NWP collection; however the committee agreed that it might be conceivable to catalog most of the collections during the allotted time period.

The primary researchers who currently visit the facility include:

- Students (grade school through graduate school)
- Filmmakers
- Descendants of suffragists and/or NWP members
- Museums hoping to borrow artifacts
- Scholars

In order to prioritize cataloging needs, the following factors should be taken into consideration:

1. Endangered Collections
2. Historical Importance/Political Considerations
3. Practical considerations of processing
4. Chronological processing regarding programming; anniversaries, birthdays, etc. (loans, researchers)
5. Doable

Since the National Woman's Party collection is fairly small in comparison to women's history collections at the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Museum of American History, the following collections could feasibly be completely cataloged during this grant period:

- Architectural Drawings/Blue Prints
- Artifacts related to woman suffrage
- Decorative Arts related to woman suffrage and NWP's office work
- Fine Arts sculpture by Adelaide Johnson as well as what the NWP collected to memorialize themselves
- Scrapbooks (dependent on how in-depth the catalog record will be)
- Political cartoons

Over the next fifteen years, the National Woman's Party will be celebrating several important anniversaries including:

- March 3, 2013: The hundredth anniversary of the pre-inaugural woman suffrage parade held in Washington, D.C.
- January, 2017: The hundredth anniversary of the first woman suffrage picket at the White House
- August 26, 2020: The hundredth anniversary of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote
- December, 2023: The hundredth anniversary of the introduction of the Equal Rights Amendment to Congress

Based on the recommendations of the advisory committee, the strategy for cataloging the NWP collection will be as follows:

1. Those items currently on public display including fine and decorative arts, some artifacts, and some political cartoons (~**200 items**)

Note: Since the majority of the fine and decorative arts collections are currently on display, the rest of those collections should also be cataloged at the same time. The small number of additional pieces makes it a feasible priority. (**Additional 100 items**)

Main Hallway
Alice Paul Office
International Room
Lobby Room
Alice Paul Bedroom
President's Room
2nd Floor Hallway
Library
Room above Kitchen
Basement
2nd Floor Storage Room
3rd Floor

2. Architectural Drawings/Blueprints collection (~**30 items**)
 - Elise DuPont drawings are currently in need of conservation and new housing
3. Scrapbooks—those scrapbooks that are currently in poor condition should be addressed with an overall finding aid (~**20 books**)
 - Dora Ogle collection (5)
 - NAWSA scrapbook (1)
 - Nina Allender scrapbook (1)
 - Alva Belmont scrapbooks (less than 10 are in poor condition—focus on those books first)
4. Artifacts (~**75 items**)
5. Photographs
 - Limit first round of cataloging to the photographs we believe are unique to the NWP collection (~**200 photographs**)
Note: Catalog those photographs related to woman suffrage and taken outside of Washington, D.C.
6. Political Cartoons
 - Donahey collection and various artists (~**45 items**)

Note: Nina Allender collection has already been cataloged into PastPerfect

7. Periodicals (**675 items total**)
 - Catalog records for each bound copy, not each individual issue
 - Begin with the NWP publications, *The Suffragist* and *Equal Rights* (**145 items**)
8. Congressional Card File (**~1,500 records total**)—catalogue as a series and then by state
 - Start with one or two records from each state (**50 records**)
 - Focus on suffrage period first (1913-1920)

The advisory committee recommended that the cataloging needs of the following collections should be addressed in future grants:

1. Textiles
2. NWP Archives