

Minstrelsy, Vaudeville, and Jim Crow, as Reflected in the Special Collections of the UNT Music Library

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Poster Abstract

The UNT Music Library hosts a number of special collections that bring to light some of the social issues that have dominated the American landscape of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These include collections of sheet music (including the former sheet music libraries of several radio stations), audio (piano rolls and cylinders), and archival materials. Those collections preserve numerous examples of the casual racism, caricature, and appropriation of minority culture, with respect to African-American communities, and to a lesser extent, Asian-Americans. One may use these artifacts to trace evolving public attitudes and political conditions, particularly between the Civil War and the First World War, as well as the lingering effects on popular culture in later years, and the impact of growing minority participation in the songwriting and recording industries.