The Trump(ism) Memorabilia Collection
Elizabeth K. Barna, Ph.D.  | Mellon Fellow in Digital and Public Humanities
elizabeth.k.barna@gmail.com

Project Description
Inspired by the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia founded by sociologist David Pilgrim, the Trump(ism) Memorabilia Collection strives to preserve objects emblematic of the Trump Era. By preserving and displaying material culture associated with Trump, I hope to combat future denial of this figure’s popularity and fascist tendencies—especially by the 55% of white women and 61% of white men who voted for him in 2020. It is critical to tell the truth amidst continued anti-intellectualism and the mainstreaming of right-wing extremism, and this collection is a means of doing so. Future exhibitions will provide space for reflection and dialogue on Trump’s rise to power, responses to it through material culture, and what each suggests about American history, culture, and futures.

The Collection:
- 40+ objects so far
- Acquired through donations; online purchases; and my own personal collection
- Includes hats, flags, bumper stickers, pins, a coffee mug, soap, a pillow, dog poop bags, mylar balloons, campaign materials, and even a crocheted toilet roll cover.

Ethical Acquisition Guidelines:
- No purchases from Trump campaign sites
- Spend as little as possible. Seek donations; bargain; buy secondhand.
- Consider financial/social cost versus educational/preservation benefit

Current Focus: Artifact Care and Refining Scope
- Writing general condition reports and care sheets
- Investing in dehumidifier, acid-free storage containers, dataloggers, and other preservation equipment
- Going back into “acquisition mode” and seeking out objects
- Current foci: donated objects belonging to supporters, objects reflecting 2020 election denial, objects pertaining to prominent white supremacist supporters/historic movements

Next Steps: Crowdsourcing, Digitization, and Exhibition
- Crowdsourced donations and donor interviews
- Catalog and exhibit the objects using Google Forms and Omeka. Buy a domain name!
- Exhibit materials in a way that contextualizes Trump as a symptom and a symbol, not a cause.

Selected References and Resources
On Whiteness and Right-Wing Politics

On Collection Care
- Basic condition reporting webinar (Deborah Rose Van Horn): https://www.connectingtocollections.org/basic-condition-reporting/

Helpful Organizations and Institutions
- Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia: https://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/
- American Association for State and Local History (online courses): https://aaslh.org/professional-development/online-learning/

Acknowledgements
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This presentation poster was designed by FPPT.
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Feel free to e-mail me at elizabeth.k.barna@gmail.com if you have questions or comments, or want to collaborate! ☺
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