

New York Society for the Suppression of Vice Records

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

Prepared by Laura Kells



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

2012

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2012

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Collection Summary

Title: New York Society for the Suppression of Vice Records

Span Dates: 1871-1953

ID No.: MSS34587

Creator: New York Society for the Suppression of Vice

Extent: 45 items ; 7 containers ; 1.4 linear feet ; 2 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Abstract: Reports relating to persons arrested as a result of the society's actions, including notations by Anthony Comstock, secretary of the society (1873-1915), and records relating to the society's predecessor, the Young Men's Christian Association of the City of New York Committee for the Suppression of Vice.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Comstock, Anthony, 1844-1915.

Organizations

New York Society for the Suppression of Vice.

Young Men's Christian Association of the City of New York. Committee for the Suppression of Vice. Young Men's Christian Association of the City of New York. Committee for the Suppression of Vice records.

Subjects

Vice control--New York (State)

Vice control--Societies, etc.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The records of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice were transferred to the Library of Congress from the Post Office Department in 1953.

Processing History

The records of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice were arranged and described in processed and prepared for microfilming in 1986. The finding aid was revised in 2012.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The records of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Microfilm

A microfilm edition of these papers is available on two reels. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, New York Society for the Suppression of Vice Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Organizational History

The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice was founded in 1873 by Anthony Comstock and his supporters as a committee within the Young Men's Christian Association of the City of New York to supervise public morality in the state, bring offenders to justice, and advocate for stricter legislation against immoral conduct. Chartered by the state legislature, it became prominent as a monitor and censor of literary works and popular literature. Comstock, who became its secretary, was succeeded after his death in 1915 by John S. Summer. The society was dissolved after Summer's death in 1950.

Scope and Content Note

The records of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice span the years 1871-1953. The collection consists chiefly of reports relating to persons arrested as a result of the society's actions, including data on the offender's age, nationality, religion, education, offense, evidence seized, and legal action taken. Included are notations by Anthony Comstock, secretary of the society (1873-1915), and records relating to the society's predecessor, the Young Men's Christian Association of the City of New York Committee for the Suppression of Vice. Also in the collection are miscellaneous correspondence, photographs and other papers.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged largely as received, mostly in bound volumes, and in the order it was filmed.

Container List

Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 19,359

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1 REEL 1	Reports of stock seized, persons arrested, businesses closed, and “unlawful matter & concerns suppressed” under the auspices of the Committee for the Suppression of Vice of the Young Men’s Christian Association of the City of New York and the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, 1871-1884 (vol. 1)
BOX 2 REEL 1	Names and record of persons arrested under the auspices of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice 1884-1895 (vol. 2)
BOX 3 REEL 1	1895-1920 (vol. 3)
BOX 4 REEL 1	1920-1950 (vol. 4)
BOX 5 REEL 2	Name index to vols.1-4 (vol. 5)
BOX 6 REEL 2	Alphabetical index, apparently to letterbooks and evidence storage closets [1871-1903?] (vol. 6)
BOX 7 REEL 2	[1904-1948?] (vol. 7)
BOX 7 REEL 2	Miscellaneous correspondence, papers, and photographs, 1880-1953 (listed in the microfilm edition as Container 8)