

WWW Project 2 Proposal
Michaela Acton

Playing cards were first created hundreds of years ago and quickly spread around the world, the art of and uses for playing cards drastically adapted culture to culture. Playing cards were easily transported by armies who used them to play games during free time. Different countries developed different designs and games to play with, interchanged different symbols for the suits; swords, cups, coins, sticks, acorns, bells, roses, and leaves. When printing became cheap, playing card design began to standardize and circulate widely, the design settled on the French colors and suits, red and black, spades, hearts, clubs, diamonds. Used primarily for a variety of games and gambling, cards were occasionally taxed or banned for their association with gambling and immorality. Some associate the symbolism of the cards with the four seasons or cycles of the moon and playing cards have been used for fortune telling. At different points in history blank playing cards were used to write messages or communicate.

Around the nineteenth century cards were mass produced and standardized leading to the enduring practices of corner indices, designs or advertisements on the back, as well as special commemorative or souvenir packs. Many modern artists have been commissioned to or opted to reinvent sets of playing cards according to their own design style or inspiration. Playing cards represent a significant union of artistry and design with utility and play in everyday life. Website would research and follow history, development, uses, and standardization of playing cards into modern artist redesigns and uses.