



*New York State Archives*

**Exhibit material B1697**

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## Overview of the Records

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<b>Repository:</b>	New York State Archives
<b>Summary:</b>	The exhibit material, possibly from of the New York exhibit at the Pan-American Exposition of 1901 includes illustrations of instructional techniques, student products, and educational programs. Also shown are student activities relating to music, physical education, and sewing from the Syracuse State Institution for Feeble-Minded Children (originally the New York State Asylum for Idiots). Other exhibit material includes reproductions of student progress reports and sample classwork like knitting, crochet, letters, and other writing exercises.
<b>Creator:</b>	Syracuse State Institution for Feeble-Minded Children
<b>Title:</b>	Exhibit material
<b>Quantity:</b>	2 cubic feet
<b>Inclusive Date:</b>	1900
<b>Series:</b>	B1697

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## Administrative History

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The Pan-American Exposition was a fair held in Buffalo, New York, from May 1 to November 2, 1901. Its purpose was to showcase the material and cultural progress of the Western Hemisphere. At the turn of the century, the Syracuse State Institution for Feeble-Minded Children was a premier facility for care and teaching of the mentally retarded; its methods and facilities were of considerable public and private interest, study, and impact.

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## Scope and Content Note

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The series consists of ca. 16 cardboard panels (24 x 27 inches) on which photographs and written commentary are posted to illustrate the instructional techniques, student products, and educational programs of the Syracuse State Institution for Feeble-Minded Children (originally the New York State Asylum for Idiots). Also present are a small number of unmounted

photographic prints. This material possibly formed part of the New York exhibit at the Pan-American Exposition of 1901.

Nine black-and-white prints (8 x 10 inches), seemingly removed or broken loose from mounting, show activities relating to music (orchestra, brass band), physical education (calisthenics), and sewing. There is also one image of uniformed attendants. Most of these are labeled on the verso "Syracuse State Institution for Feeble-Minded Children." These photos closely resemble others in the series that are mounted on four cardboard panels; some of the panels have space for missing photos. The mounted items are identified only as "Syracuse" and with a number.

A separate group of mounted material reproduces educational progress reports of ten students at the Syracuse State Institution for Feeble-Minded Children. Examples are on three cardboard sheets. Each includes the report narrative (in cursive) along with a small (2 x 3 inches) photograph of the student. Admission dates on the reports range from 1883 to 1892.

Other sections of the exhibit display products of students' class work, labeled as done by "imbecile" children aged 15-22 years, most dating from the 1890s. Mounted on six boards, these include examples of mittens and fine crochet work, mirror-writing, letters, and other writing exercises.

Additional panels provide outlines (in cursive) of methods used at the institution to teach vocal music, geography, calisthenics, primary numbers, elementary word instruction, fancy work and kindergarten occupations to mentally retarded students. These parallel the subjects depicted in the photographs on other panels.

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## Use of Records

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### Access Restrictions

Restricted due to fragility, pending treatment. Use with assistance of archivist.

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## Access Terms

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- Exhibiting
- Black-and-white prints (photographs)
- Crocheting
- Education--Curricula
- New York (State)
- Exhibitions--New York (State)--Buffalo
- Teaching intellectually disabled students

- Documenting exhibitions
- Children with mental disabilities--Education--New York (State)
- Intellectual disability facilities patients
- Syracuse (N.Y.)
- Captions
- People with mental disabilities--Institutional care--New York (State)
- New York (State). Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
- Syracuse Developmental Center
- Pan-American Exposition (1901 : Buffalo, N.Y.)
- New York (State). Department of Mental Hygiene