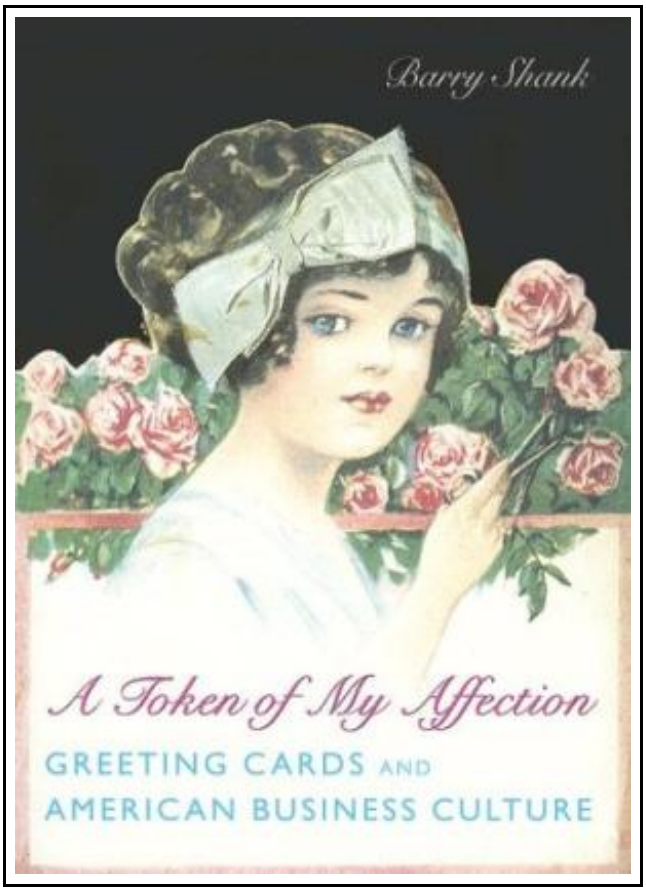
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A TOKEN OF MY AFFECTION: GREETING CARDS AND AMERICAN BUSINESS CULTURE (PAPERBACK)

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Columbia University Press, United States, 2006. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 202 x 146 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Each year in the United States, millions of mass-produced greeting cards proclaim their occasional messages: For My Loving Daughter, On the Occasion of Your Marriage, and It s a Boy! For more than 150 years, greeting cards have tapped into and organized a shared language of love, affection, and kinship, becoming an integral part of American life and culture. Contemporary incarnations of these emotional transactions performed through small bits of decorated paper are often dismissed as vacuous clich s employing worn-out stereotypes. Nevertheless, the relationship of greeting cards to systems of material production is well worth studying and understanding, for the modern greeting card is the product of an industry whose values and aims seem to contradict the sentiments that most cards express. In fact, greeting cards articulate shifting forms of love and affiliation experienced by people whose lives have been shaped by the major economic changes of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A Token of My Affection shows in fascinating detail how the evolution of the greeting card reveals the fundamental power of economic organization to enable and constrain experiences of longing, status, desire, social connectedness, and love and to structure and partially determine the most private, internal, and intimate of feelings. Beautifully illustrated, A Token of My Affection follows the development of the modern greeting card industry from the 1840s, as a way of recovering that most elusive of things-the emotional subjectivity of another age. Barry Shank charts the evolution of the greeting card from an afterthought to a traditional printing and stationery business in the mid-nineteenth century to a multibillion-dollar industry a hundred years later. He explains what an industry devoted to emotional sincerity means for...

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