

## Book Collecting Now: The Value of Print in a Digital Age

**Matthew Budman**

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Matthew Budman's *Book Collecting Now* is both an enthusiastic, clear-eyed look at book collecting in the digital age and an info-rich primer for those who want to begin, expand, or refocus their collections.

Despite predictions, print has not fallen victim to a digital mass extinction. *Book Collecting Now* opens with a spirited examination of how print reading incorporates touch, scent, and eye appeal to reach beyond the digital experience. It is aimed at ordinary, non-wealthy people who collect for pleasure and personal interest, and it addresses all sorts of niche interests, including scouring flea markets for valuable texts and collecting everything from pulp science fiction to Cold War books.

The text covers the most fruitful places to look for books both online and off; how to avoid scams or paying too much; how to evaluate a book's condition, research its publishing history, and avoid mistakes that decrease value; and how to pass along books that are no longer needed. Publishing practices and terms are explained from a collector's viewpoint, including deciphering front matter to identify print runs and determine the dates of earlier editions.

The book ends with a realistic forecast for the future: while some reading experiences are best suited to digital (like a mystery you read while waiting for a plane or info-dense tomes that are most useful when they're searchable), the pleasures of print are not likely to go away. Numerous mentions of both classic and contemporary titles hold the delight of stumbling across an old friend, while tempting photos of loaded shelves will have readers turning their heads sideways to spot familiar titles. The ample back matter will be helpful for getting collectors started or more honed in.

*Book Collecting Now* is itself a collectible gem for fans of the printed word.

SUSAN WAGGONER (May/June 2019)

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