

Items of Value, Inc.

TRENDING COLLECTIBLES

On this table is a 1926 Underwood manual typewriter for sale. Beside it is a PreColumbian pottery figure. On that table over there is an Ikat purchased in the Philippines just after World War II. Beside it is a late 19th century Chinese ceramic plate portraying a 5-toed dragon against yellow background. On the third table is an unopened Star Wars figure sitting beside a vintage Superman comic book. If you went to an estate sale, flea market, or antique show, what items would you recognize and what do you know about their present value?

People have individual tastes and desires to own different items that give them enjoyment. Some are followers, interested in being part of the "in crowd" who is up to date on items they own. Some are collectors who do not care what anyone else thinks about what they like. Others are resellers, not having an interest in acquiring items for their own enjoyment but rather dedicated to buying items currently in relatively high demand, with a view to making a profit in the resale market. They try to sense what people are interested in and then seek to buy these items for resale.

Resellers are always taking a chance when buying an item. They do not want to "overpay" for it. Since I have been in the estate sale business for 39 years, they, as well as the public in general, often ask me how much I think they can fetch when they resell. Some endeavor to make 50% profit. Sometimes, they are content with less profit if they have a potential customer who will buy the item quickly. Some find that they make more money by the quick turnaround resale with only a slight markup over purchase price instead of holding out for a higher percentage profit.

Public tastes change over time. The saying "What is new becomes old and what is old becomes new" is very true. People often see items at sales that they remember their grandparents had. Perhaps they see an item they enjoyed when they were young. Nostalgia is their reason for wanting to purchase the item now. Think of how color preferences, clothing and furniture styles have changed in the last 50 years. Think of the history of recorded sound devices and recordings has changed. What historically were the periods of audiocassettes, CDs, DVDs?

What are the dictates of public taste? Throughout the 19th century in Europe and the United States, it was graphics, pictures, published in magazines and books that were the greatest influence on public taste. Fashion magazines have long controlled and promoted public taste. A second influence of public taste is simply seeing or learning about what