

How Many Makes A Collection?

Collections are like home movies. Everyone has them, but no one wants to see them. Museums are the exception. People go to museums and pay to see other peoples' collections. My husband loves museums. He wants to see and read everything. I love seeing some things; but after a couple of hours, I'd rather see a collection of my thoughts, a chair and a snack. The Museum of Bad Art is in Dedham, Massachusetts. The Liberace Museum is in Las Vegas. Minneapolis is home to the Museum of Questionable Medical Devices and the Burlingame Museum of Pez Memorabilia is, of course, in Burlingame, California. Build it and they will come. Speaking from personal experience, build a gift shop and they will stay longer. Beanie Babies are worth more with their tags on. Barbie Dolls are worth more in their original box. Stamps are more valuable if they're in a full sheet and coins are more valuable if they're in mint condition. It seems the less we use something the more valuable it is. Does this mean Uncle Sam collects government workers? I come from a family of collectors. One grandfather collected clocks and the other collected cars. My mother collected figurines and my father - well, my father was married four times. My father collected problems. Then there's Cousin Walter. He's a church deacon. He collects money every Sunday. According to Cousin Walter, people put more money in his basket on Christmas, Easter - and when they feel guilty. According to Cousin Walter, anyone who wants change from his basket should feel guilty of shortchanging God. My husband's not a collector. He's a saver. The things he saves fill our closets, as well as any available storage space - like under the stairs. They also fill spaces that weren't intended to be storage space - like suitcases between trips. My husband doesn't save things because they'll increase in value. He saves things in case we need them some day. When we moved from the East Coast to the West Coast, he brought his winter boots. He'll need those when Hell freezes over. I have friends who bring an extra suitcase on vacations to bring home souvenirs. Not me. My souvenirs fit into a very small place - my memory. I'm not a collector. It's hard for me to give up space for things - especially when those things then become collectors - of dust.

About the Author

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