



ABC for Book Collectors

John Carter

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Eighth edition, completely revised and re-set, with additional information and an Introduction by Nicolas Barker. Shaken, Unsophisticated, Harleian Style, Fingerprint, E-book, Dentelle. Can you define these terms? If not, this is the book for you! John Carter's ABC For Book Collectors has long been established as the most enjoyable as well as the most informative reference book on the subject. Here, in over 490 alphabetical entries, ranging in length from a single line to several pages, may be found definition and analysis of the technical terms used in book collecting and bibliography, interspersed with salutary comments on such subjects as auctions, condition, facsimiles and fakes, 'points', rarity, etc. This eighth edition has been revised by Nicolas Barker, editor of The Book Collector and incorporates additional words created by the introduction of web-based collecting. The ABC For Book Collectors retains its humorous character as the one indispensable guide to book collecting while also keeping us up-to-date with modern terminology.

ABC for Book Collectors Details

Date : Published January 1st 2004 by Oak Knoll Press (first published 1952)

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Author : John Carter

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From Reader Review ABC for Book Collectors for online ebook

Dan McCormack says

Great reference work on the language of books and book collecting.

Sheryl says

Extraordinary helpful mass of info for any lover of books, collector or not.

Deb says

What a gem of a book. If you have ever wanted to know what a particular part of the book are such as: deckle Edges, pointille, catchword, skiver, point maniacs, cathedral binding - this is where you find out. There is a specialized vocabulary for almost everything, and books are no different in that regard. I bought this - and in Book format which is getting more rare for me - so I can enjoy playing with my books.

Frankie says

Containing a wealth of trivial-for-some-but-not-for-me information and terminology on book collecting, *ABC*... proved itself readable per sitting as well as a reference. I thought it (in 8th ed.) a bit expensive for its size (or format, *ibid.*), but it paid for itself when I saved \$65 on a recent purchase of a translator-signed rarity. Descriptions of terms of condition, format (I always wondered what "8vo" meant), bindings, auction and cataloguers' lingo were succinct and easy to comprehend.

Carter showed a good bit of wit as well, especially when referring to the "chronological obsession" (the need to obtain the earliest if not the best copy), which invariably lead to "issue-mongers" and "point-maniacs" (bibliographers and collectors who use printers' errors to argue degrees of rarity). The highlight of this delightful eccentricity culminates (for me) in the entry for "misprints," in which the word "misprint" appears 12 times with various errant spellings, as Carter expounds on the unimportance of the same.

Overall, it's a comprehensive and amateur-friendly manual. The anatomy of a book itself is illustrated in spots on the margins, headers and inside cover. If you're curious about books pre-dating mass market and movie posters on the cover, you should start here.

Natalie Kling says

This was a required textbook for one of my library school classes. I still use it today. It explains parts of a book and is so helpful in understanding the book printing process of the past and present.

Sarah Fisher says

So, it's basically a dictionary for rare books and the antiquarian book trade. But don't expect scholarly non-biased descriptions. They are scholarly. But the author has a slight air of snobbery which is thoroughly entertaining. He knows his stuff and isn't afraid to talk snootily of the book trade and its less savory aspects. Seriously, read a dictionary shouldn't be this enjoyable. Also, these "biased" descriptions offer lots of subtle insight into the book trade for newbies.

Lucas says

The standard work in the field for a reason. But what surprised me most was how funny it was. To help keep the terms fresh in my mind, I took the definitions I didn't know and turned them into an Anki deck, which I will continue to use.

Torie says

This one is from the advanced reading list for my class at Rare Book School in a few weeks. Yes, that's right, Rare Book School. As Lia said, "Is that real?" I love being a librarian.

John says

nonfiction, history, bibliography

Ted Gurley says

Great reference

Sarah says

I learned I do not really want to be a book collector. I like reading books too much. Rare books often can't be read since that could damage them. I would rather read a reprint. But it was still really interesting reading about old, rare, expensive books and the people who collect them.

Richard says

Rating a reference manual is tricky, especially a reference manual for a trade/interest that you do not participate in. For me, this gets 5 stars because it does exactly what I need it to, as an author and a player of RPGs. It gives me terminology and reference to present a reasonable facsimile of a Bibliophile in a narrative.

Lynne says

Key book for anyone interested in book collecting. A great glossary with a sense of humor.

Jen says

Had to read this for a summer class on the history of the book. Written dictionary style it was a bit of a slog to get through, but it also had some dry British humor mixed in. The entry for "misprints" was actually hilarious. Useful if you plan on collecting old books.

Elizabeth says

I've no doubt that this is an indispensable reference book, but it is far less witty than the collector's accounts of it I've heard led me to believe. The most whimsical element is how it labels the material elements of the book itself (endpapers, verso, recto, etc.) in order to provide real evidence of definitions.
