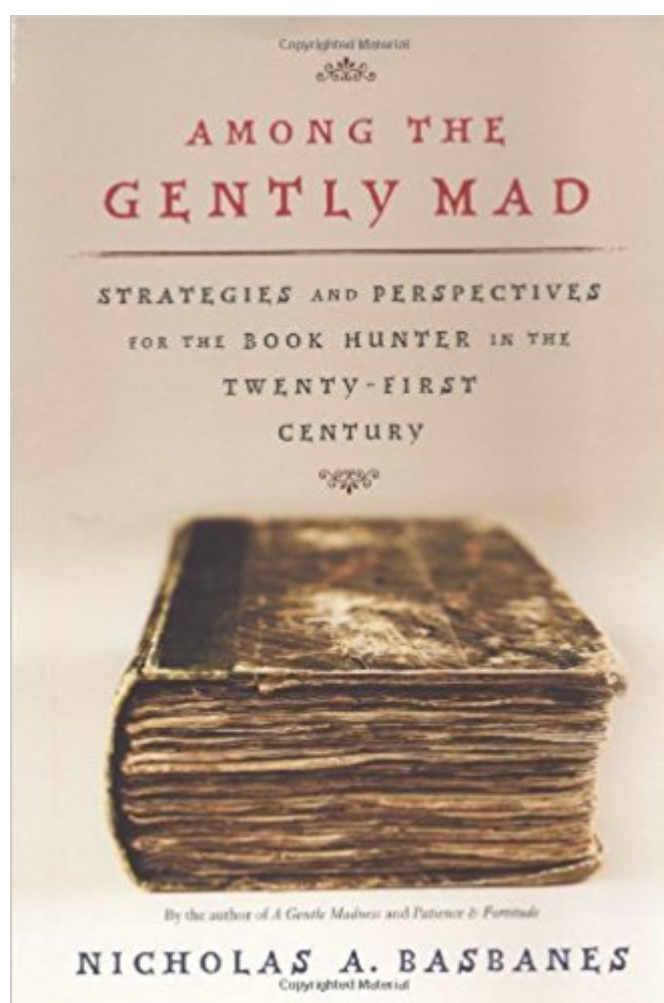


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# Among The Gently Mad: Strategies And Perspectives For The Book-Hunter In The 21st Century



## Synopsis

A field guide for the modern book collector From the author of *A Gentle Madness*-a book with more than seventy thousand copies in print that delighted bibliophiles everywhere-comes a twenty-first-century guide to book collecting that deals with both the traditional methods of acquisition and the electronic tools now available on the Internet. Sharing the superb insight he has gathered from booksellers over the years, Nicholas Basbanes offers a refresher course on the fundamentals that endure, while questioning certain practices of doubtful validity. Topics include how to determine if a book is a first edition, how to spot book club editions, the importance of dust jackets, scouting the flea markets, how to work the book fairs, and the importance of handling the goods, as well as discussing less tangible issues like spotting trends and having a focus. Then he takes a long look at the pros and cons of Internet buying, illuminating how you can use these electronic tools to your advantage and making this the book no modern collector will want to be without.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Basbanes's guide to book collecting is a more practical, but no less impassioned, complement to his earlier history of bibliophilia, *A Gentle Madness*. He presents useful tips illustrated with charming anecdotes about the collecting habits of everyone from Winston Churchill to Umberto Eco. To Basbanes, book collecting isn't about making money, but "about gratifying a passion in a sensible way." He urges collectors to buy books that they know and develop specific areas of interest to

avoid "buying blind-the most frequently committed transgression in book collecting." He insists that it is possible to acquire first-rate collections on modest budgets, and extols the virtues of select Internet sites. Particularly intriguing are Basbanes's descriptions of the most interesting collections he has encountered. Among these are the George Arents Collection at the New York Public Library, which consists of several hundred thousand objects in 20 languages on the history, literature and lore of tobacco, as well as the Jay Miller Aviation History Collection at the Central Arkansas Library, consisting of 6,000 books on flight history and 50,000 aviation journals, along with hundreds of aircraft operation manuals. Basbanes also offers some startling figures. A first issue copy of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, for example, recently went for \$15,000. Though targeted primarily at prospective collectors, this lively book will appeal to any book lover, as Basbanes's enthusiasm is infectious. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Every page of this compendium contains real information. Basbanes tells you what you want and need to know after you have fallen in love with an area or a subject and have begun to think about amassing what you love. He explains clearly how to start, how to listen, how to search. He has no patience for those who buy as an investment only, and he is direct about that. He teaches questions to ask in libraries, of dealers, on the Web; he makes good distinctions between how the Web has facilitated some kinds of book buying as well as making clear what's irreplaceable about book fairs and book dealers. Every librarian should read this book because it illuminates the passion for books from the collector's perspective, one that parallels our own (it may even intersect it at some point). It is rich in engaging vignettes of book collecting and book collectors. It even makes the madness seem, well, logical. GraceAnne DeCandido Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

If you're not a bibliophile before reading this book you'll certainly be one after. Nicholas Basbanes gives a wonderfully twisted view of the world of books and book collecting. An avid collector himself, Basbanes teases the senses as he explores the world of books from his perspective. Surprisingly, this old time book collector discusses how the Internet can play an important role in making the acquisition of books affordable to the collector of even modest means. He provides an impressive list of helpful websites and other sources to aid in that quest. Practical utilitarian purposes aside, Among the Gently Mad is one of the most delightful books I've read in a long time. The fact that it happens to be about my passion is even one better. If you love books, the touch, the smell, the tactile feel of gracefully aged pages between your finger tips, you'll appreciate Basbanes and his

thoughts. You'll appreciate the quest all over again. Joe Waynick, Author "Internet Bookselling Made Easy!" series[...]

I doubt that many of Nicholas Basbanes' readers will have the resources to emulate some of the collectors he describes in *Among the Gently Mad* (and in his earlier works *A Gentle Madness* and *Patience and Fortitude*.) I know I certainly won't be buying a Shakespeare First Folio, but nevertheless I value *Among the Gently Mad* for the perspective it gives me on my fellow bibliophiles. I enjoy reading about the book fairs and the lengths to which some collectors go to add to their libraries. Most of all I enjoy the tips Basbanes and his subjects give me about adding to my own collection. An absolutely essential addition to any gentle mad person's library.

This was purchased as a gift for a fellow bibliophile, and he has reported back to me that it is an excellent resource for expanding his book collection. The author is rather knowledgeable, and was thoroughly enjoyable to read. I definitely recommend it.

Nicholas Basbanes is THE chronicler of all things in the world of books, reading, libraries, bibliophiles and bibliomanes .. *AMONG THE GENTLY MAD* is a truly engaging part of the story and should not be overlooked ...

Lots of great info

I am surprised that I had not found this book earlier. Great book for the booklover.

worked out well

Nice book, as described.

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