

## Why Collect Rare Collectibles?

### The Nature of Rare Collectibles.

As their name suggests, all rare collectibles are scarce, hard to find items. They can be antiques that are desirable because of their age, type of craftsmanship or some other unique feature that represents the past. Some rare collectibles are so old that they are considered to be antiquities - artifacts of an ancient civilization such as ancient Greek or ancient Chinese society. Alternatively, rare collectibles can be of very recent origin, sometimes being only a few years old.

The common denominator of all rare collectibles, no matter what their type or age, is rarity. Frequently, because of their scarcity and their appeal, rare collectibles are also valuable. But whether they are valuable or inexpensive, rare collectibles are always important pieces in a collection.

### Rare is ...

The definition of "rare" or "rarity" changes with the type of object, and accordingly, the definition of "rare collectibles" is somewhat imprecise - there is no strict line of demarcation between what is "rare" and what is "not rare." In some instances an item is considered to be a rare collectible because only one or two examples of that object are known to exist in the entire world. In other cases, hundreds or even thousands of a particular object may have survived to the present, but because their existence has not yet been discovered (such as very old porcelain dolls that were kept in a trunk that is now buried in an attic) or they are fragile and easily damaged (such as pottery, an early postage stamp or a 200 year-old piece of paper ephemera), high quality examples are considered to be scarce.

### Almost Any Type of Object Can Become a Rare Collectible, if Scarce Enough.

Thousands of different types of rare collectibles exist throughout the world. Certain coins and postage stamps, books and manuscripts, pottery, weapons and other militaria, antique tools, original artwork, antique furniture, and paper ephemera can all be rare collectibles. "Paper ephemera" consists of written or printed material that has survived to the present despite the fact that the pieces were originally produced as disposable items, intended to be quickly discarded or destroyed. Examples of ephemera that can be rare collectibles include certain postcards, posters, trade cards, leaflets, exposition programs and advertising flyers, all common enough at the time, but mostly thrown away almost immediately. Some autographs, travel souvenirs and collectible memorabilia are also rare collectibles.

Rare collectibles can be from anywhere in the world and from any culture. Rare Oriental collectibles include small items such as Chinese Dynastic pottery or temple objects, as well as large items such as articles of traditional clothing or armor from the Japanese feudal period. European rare collectibles are equally varied, and range from ancient Greek statuary to the beautifully illuminated (illustrated) maps that were drawn by early cartographers during the Age of Exploration in the 16th Century. Collectible, rare objects from the Americas include certain pieces of Native American (Indian) pottery, blankets or beadwork, original historical documents from Colonial or Revolutionary times, and ancient Inca, Aztec or Maya amulets, pottery and carvings.

### Why Collect Rare Collectibles?

Many people seek out rare collectibles because of their inherent value. For these people, rare collectibles are a form of investment. But the primary motivation for many other collectors is the "thrill of the hunt" - that certain sense of satisfaction that is felt when a very hard to find piece is tracked down and finally located somewhere in the world

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### About the Author

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