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**TO WHAT EXTENT COLLECTORS OF
INTANGIBLES HAVE MOTIVATIONS DISTINCT
FROM THOSE OF COLLECTORS OF
MATERIAL OBJECTS**

JACQUELINE MARGOT SWIFT

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MA Research

The University of Huddersfield

Submission date as 31st January 2013

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Abstract

Collecting is an inherently human activity and much can be understood about the individual through the observation of this practice. This thesis identifies the motivations of collectors of intangibles, such as beer tickers (people who collect information relating to the beers they have drunk) and train spotters (those who collect notes of trains they have seen), in comparison to collectors of material objects. Little is published that gives insight into this niche activity, although through television and the printed media, negative opinions on this social group are plentiful. By observations of social settings at real ale pubs, a railway gala, numerous beer festivals, and 19 interviews with both types of collectors, this thesis reveals a complex and fulfilling activity. The principal conclusion is that whilst these collectors of 'nothing' recognise the apparent absurdity of collecting hundreds or thousands of 'ticks', that have no value beyond themselves, they in doing so construct fulfilling lives that are both highly particularised and inherently sociable. Whilst there is clear evidence that their motivations frequently overlap with collectors of material artefacts, the notion of 'being' and not 'having' is their main motivation.

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Key words

collectors • collecting • beer tickers • bus spotters • bird spotters • track bashers • material culture

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Introduction

I started just by genuine interest, not through wanting to list, I really had a feel for natural history ... it started very simply, I was 8 or 9 years old, ... we put a nest box up in the garden that had got used and the following winter there was this funny thrush turned up on the lawn at home and it was a redwing, nothing too exotic, a bird that appears from Scandinavia, and I just thought 'that's very different' and it just captured me, I thought, bloody hell, I've just recognized and identified something that was not usual, something that I've never seen before. Interview with Jason, Bird Spotter

There are a significant number of people in society who are not interested in following the mainstream and who stand out as different by the choices they make in their leisure time. Within the media 'tickers' and 'spotters' (people who collect information relating to the beers they have tasted or birds or trains they have seen) are referred to as "a strange bunch" (Mellows, 2008 p.18), "fanatics who religiously record" (Hunter-Tilney, 2011 p.40) and they even suggest themselves that they may have "Asperger's" or "the collecting gene" (Swift, respondent interviews, 2012). Michael G. Harvey's (2009) book of memoirs of trainspotting from the 1950s and 1960s is entitled *Forget the Anorak* in acknowledgement of this popular perception. The truth is, it's no longer fashionable to be a 'spotter' and the generations of young boys who would stand on the end of a station platform

with intentions of journeying the land hunting down engine numbers is drying up. They do exist. They were there at the East Lancashire Diesel Gala, on the 12.46 Rawtenstall to Bury, Train Loco 37901, in October 2012, (Figure 1) but not in numbers. The majority were middle-aged males, travelling with their peers and a plastic pot of real ale for company. The attractions of the skate park and the computer game may be too exciting for the average youth to pass by, but the world of 'tickers and spotters', those collectors of nothing, creators of records and data, is thriving, if you know where to look.

This thesis questions why some people are collectors of 'intangibles' such as beer tickers, track bashers (people who collect data relating to the train tracks they



Figure 1: Diesel Gala Weekend Bury, Bolton Street Station

have travelled) and bird spotters rather than collectors of objects; what is their motivation for collecting and how is this distinct from collectors of objects? The question would inform the author's own research project; a collection of over 3,000 digital photographs of architectural date stones has been recorded and collated by myself and my partner (Figure 2) and I became interested in our own motivations. Whilst there were infinite levels of interest in the variations of location, typographic style, material substance and purpose of these date stones, we were unsure what to do with the collection which was becoming large and difficult to maintain. From what started as a visual taxonomy the collection was in danger of turning into a mere list. Why was this a worthwhile activity, and what were our



Figure 2: 1881 at Smithfield Market, London

motivations, as we are quite different personalities: myself a design orientated collector of 'things' and he, a scientist who does not like 'unnecessary clutter'? The images we collected were markers of our travels. Alongside the ephemeral tickets, leaflets, sugar wrappers, café napkins and small sketchbooks containing notes, the photographic collection seemed to be a different genre altogether, having none of the usual tactile elements. We started to construct leisure time around the growth of the collection, aiming to have a continuous list of examples from 1496 to the present day.

Within a local real ale pub, it became evident that virtually all the people who drank there had some form of collection of their own. Those who 'collected' to add to lists such as bus spotters, bird spotters, train bashers or beer tickers recorded and documented these to 'keep'. Others collected (or had collected in the past) specific artefacts such as historical maps or ephemera such as brewery memorabilia and some collected things that were commercially created for collectors such as sci-fi trading cards or pottery.

The variations in the methods of recording by the list makers had been observed and, as each individual had distinct preferences, it became apparent that this was a highly particularised activity. There were a number of aspects to consider when investigating the motivations of these collectors. For some, the activity involved extensive travel; for some a scientific interest in the natural world; others were concerned with the aesthetics of taste; others strived to document history and concerned themselves with archiving. For all of them, however, the activities were uniquely framed and constructed around specific criteria. The research was designed to capture these variations and consider the motivations behind them against the established theories on collecting.

As some of the participants were already known to the researcher, qualitative information would be best gathered through ethnographic means, using a participant-observation method at a variety of social events: in real ale pubs, a railway gala, beer festivals and through a series of semi-structured interviews. The intention was to find out why they pursued these specific collections. The academic literature on collecting in general is well established, there is little that

has examined these social groups and this thesis aims to present insights into what drives them to undertake what can be years of dedicated 'work', with the accumulation of not only hundreds, but in some cases thousands of 'ticks'. Unseen by the public gaze, their collections remain shrouded in mystery; a collection of 'nothing' does not fit with the usual expectations of accumulations of 'stuff'.

William Davies King (2008) has argued that:

Collecting is a constant reassertion of the power to own, an exercise in controlling otherness, and finally a kind of monumental building to insure survival after death. For this reason you can often read the collector in his or her collection, if not in the collection themselves, then in the business of acquiring, maintaining and displaying them. To collect is to write a life. (King, 2008, p.38)

We are led to question what the aim and purpose is and what kind of a monument the collectors of 'intangibles' are intending to create.

Chapter one describes the history and changing contexts of collecting and the cultures that developed: the motivating forces behind interests in material objects, the growth of private and public collections, commercialisation and consumerism, the post-modern concern for reflections on everyday life, the collection of ephemera and items of low value and collecting in the digital realm.

Chapter two focuses on the theories on collecting: materialism, how people use collecting activity to represent the self, aesthetics and taste in collecting, how collections become symbolic representations, narrative and histories of collecting behaviour, systems of collecting, the impact on the individual and how collectors are categorised in social groups.

Chapter three describes the development of the primary research methodologies, initial testing and scoping and the framing of the research question.

Chapter four presents the observations and respondent interviews of both the collectors of 'tangible' and 'intangibles', in order to examine their motivations to collect. The following aspects were investigated: when and why they began to collect, how they go about the activity, how this impacts on their day-to-day lives,

the financial impact, what they collect as adults, how they manage their collections, what status this gives them, implications on personal relationships and the heritage potential. There is a short case study of the various activities of beer tickers.

Chapter five analyses the findings, to determine the motivations of the collectors of intangibles by comparison with collectors of objects, and discusses: the effects of external influences, levels of engagement with collections, the significance of the collection to the individual, notions of caring for the collection, whether the collection can be regarded as a hoard, whether these collectors are motivated to complete collections, the long term prospects for the collection after the death of the collector and assesses the motivations in relation to consumerism.

Chapter six contains the conclusions of the findings with discussion on the potential for further study.

Chapter 1

Collecting, a very human activity

Introduction

This chapter describes how the collecting of material objects has changed over time and how socio-economic environments have impacted on the shifts in perceptions of value. The need to define oneself through the collection of material objects is not a recent phenomenon and, in the modern world, the technology of reproduction has further complicated perceptions of worth and values (Walter Benjamin, 1936). Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood (1996) describe goods themselves as having neutral status and explain that it is how they are used within the social world that makes them significant. However, they also suggest that single objects only have value when related to others and collecting serves as a vehicle to contrast, match and classify, which is a natural activity of the human mind. In this study it is important to understand why people collect and the motives of people who collect intangibles.

1.1 A brief history of collecting

Records of collecting activity can be identified as far back as the Roman plundering of Greece in 212BC and, in turn, the unearthing of Ancient Rome from 1450-1550AD with the subsequent trade in rusting medallions which were regarded as precious objects of treasure (Hodgen (1964) and Bazin (1967) cited by Belk, 1995 p.29).

Religious relics have long been sought after items. From the fourth century they were collected to adorn the growing numbers of churches, taken home by pilgrims to enshrine them. By the seventh century this was a very active trade (Christine Quigly, 2005). Relics were used when taking oaths in the Middle Ages and were thought to have healing powers. This resulted in the dismantling of corpses such as the incorrupt body of St Teresa of Avila (d.1582) which was "parcelled out by the relic-hunters during her many exhumations" (Quigly, 2005, p.257). Her left hand spent 38 years with General Franco until his death in 1975, who held it devoutly as a representation of the glories of the Golden Age and which "became Franco's protector to rescue and save the true Spain" (Perez-Romero, 1996, p.68) (Figure 2).

Florence, Italy, was a city dedicated to the collection of art and was described in



Figure 3: The incorrupt arm of St. Teresa of Avila in Alba de Tormes, Spain.

a 1591 guide as “filled with ancient statues, with noble paintings and extremely precious objects” (Gloria Fossi, 2010 p.7). Lorenzo the Magnificent’s collection of ancient classical sculptures was established in the garden of San Marco, a space dedicated to the muses, artists could gather here to reflect and gain inspiration. In the sixteenth century the Medicis established their renowned private art collection at the Uffizi, attracting dignitaries and international visitors, who would bring contributions of their own to enlarge the collection (Fossi, 2010).

From Renaissance times, the tradition of collecting and displaying exotica and natural forms through Cabinets of Curiosity or Wunderkammer was well established. To “constitute a marvel” as defined by Kenneth (1991), cited in Belk (1995), objects were categorised or compared by the following characteristics:

- 1 *Novelty or rarity*
- 2 *The foreign or exotic*
- 3 *The strange or bizarre*
- 4 *The unusually large and the unusually small*
- 5 *Demonstrations of supreme technical skill or virtuosity; the triumph over difficult problems and the achievements of the seemingly impossible*
- 6 *Vividness and verisimilitude*
- 7 *The transcendent and the sublime*
- 8 *The surpassing and the unexpected (Belk, 1995, p.11)*

Belk points out that these types of collections were created largely to celebrate

the secular world and were a phenomena of the Protestant Reformation. However, these disconnected and random collections were superseded as more satisfactory ways of representing material objects were sought: "the souvenir club would no longer suit as an indicator of authoritative knowledge" (Victor Buchli, 2002, p.5).

New fads and fashions developed to excite collectors, such as the pursuits of rare Dutch tulip bulbs which "affected everyone from shopkeepers to aristocrats" (Belk, 1995, p.35). Excess in trading became so extreme that, in 1637, the Dutch government exercised state control over their prices.

As the trade routes opened to the East and the West interest in and the availability of unusual ceramics, furniture, wall hangings and art fuelled consumer desire. This account of the 18th century sets the scene:

Apparently everyone engaged in the East India trade was a potential smuggler, seizing the occasion to turn his opportunity to personal profit. This illicit trade was, moreover, encouraged by ladies of quality, who were not above resorting to various tricks to evade the laws. (B.Sprague Allen, 1969, p.227)

Individuals asserted their importance in society as a result of acquiring exotic and fashionable objects. Goods were used as rituals to attribute meaning, clarify social understanding and position aesthetic discernment (Douglas and Isherwood, 1996). Even Jonathan Swift in his 1710 *Journal to Stella* described himself as having "'a fancy of resolving to grow mad' for porcelain" (Allen, 1969, p.196). In 1759, at a time when the taxonomy of plants was being established, at The White House, Kew, the Earl of Bute, gardener to the Prince of Wales, founded the botanical garden with the aim to " ... contain all the plants known on Earth" (Kew, 2012).

Through travel and The Grand Tour, the aristocracy and gentry of the 17th and 18th Centuries, in seeing unique sites 'collected' an intangible set of experiences, these were part of a collective gaze where values of worth were universally accepted. This developed from the search for scholastic knowledge and cultural improvement. Initially important were the observations of galleries and museums, which later led to consuming viewing beauty and the sublime through landscapes and rustic idylls (John Urry, 2002).

In the 19th century, colonization and exploration provided new opportunities to acquire primitive forms from Africa. Louis Perrois (2007) describes how in 1855 Paul Du Chaillu was the first Westerner to the Gabon interior to acquire "idols" and "fetishes" (Perrois, 2007, p.63). Such trophies, artefacts, photography and "ethnographic samples"(Perrois, 2007, p.71) were exhibited in French and German museums, and by the 1880s Fang sculptures and masks were well sought after:

When they first came to light, the ancestor statuary was viewed in Parisian artistic and literary circles as portals to secret, forbidden things. The shudder provoked by this descent into a "primitive" and "savage" universe, so completely alien to the values of bourgeois Belle Époque Europe, delighted those who were hungry for alternate forms of expression. (Perrois, 2007, p.72)

By 1906 Henri Matisse and the European avant-garde were purchasing pieces of African sculptures in Paris, to serve as inspiration for modernist art (Alisa LaGamma, 2007).

During the 19th century the opportunities for collecting became more accessible to the petit-bourgeoisie, who had a thirst for self-improvement. The big shift from collecting as an elitist or educational activity into mass consumerism in England was marked by the The Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in 1851. It was here that commercial goods were first brought together in one place. The Great Exhibition itself was described as:

a lavish spectacle that for the first time brought consumer luxuries into a museum setting with monumental architecture and extravagant display. (Belk, 1995, p.13)

It included the use of sex as a selling tool with "deliberately titillating", (Beaver (1986) cited in Belk, 1995, p.13) classical Greek female nudes. These goods also served to entertain the boredom of the banal life of the middle-class 19th century housewife, whose:

Everyday life was cluttered with cultural debris that showed her as an easy target for the peddlers of an inferior and industrial culture. (Highmore, 2002 p.11)

This fetishization of goods was further facilitated by the department store, demonstrated in the writings of Émile Zola. In the preface to *The Ladies' Paradise*

written in 1883, Brian Nelson (2008) describes the changes in the retail landscape of the time. In 1852 in Paris, Bon Marché was the largest department store, which through merchandising and advertising, transformed the activity of shopping into an erotic fascination:

The term 'window-shopping in French is, of course, suggestively sensual: 'lèche-vitrines' – literally, licking the windows. (Nelson, 2008, p.xii)

Commodity culture for the masses, the age of the bibelot, bric-a-brac, the trinket had arrived.

1.2 Public collections

Aside from the individual collectors, there developed national collections which were open to the general public. These had the noble aim of making art available to all: the National Gallery opened in London in 1838 and the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1852, “to educate working people and to inspire British designers and manufacturers” (V&A, 2012). The year after the Great Exhibition, profits were used to establish the Museum of Manufactures, as it was initially known, and exhibits were purchased to form the basis of its collections (V&A, 2012).

Philanthropic individuals also developed collections for public access, for example at the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle. This was built in the lavish style of a French château to house a collection “creating a world-class museum ... in order to introduce the wider world of art to the local people” (The Bowes Museum, 2012). 15,000 artefacts were acquired for the collection between 1862 and 1874. This was the dedicated work of John Bowes and his French wife Joséphine, neither of whom lived to see the museum open in 1892.

At a very local level, the Cawthorne village Victoria Jubilee Museum, near Barnsley, South Yorkshire was established in 1884 by the resident vicar, in “a spirit of self-education” (Barry Jackson, 1991, p.118). This was funded partly by annual subscription from local people and partly financed by the landowning Spencer Stanhope family. An account from June 1884 describes the collection:

... some Arab shields, spears and knives, brought from the Field of Battle by W. Spencer Stanhope, Lieut. 19th Hussars. The Rev. H. Sandwith has kindly lent us some specimens of early Cyprian Pottery, found in ancient tombs in the Island of Cyprus. A most valuable collection of mineral

specimens, with various other things, has been lent to the Society by Mr. Stanhope, whilst Mr. George Haworth has contributed among other things four cases of Brazilian Butterflies etc., of marvellous brilliancy of colour. (Jackson, 1991, p.118)

This small village museum relied upon donated artefacts and reflected more the aspirations of the Wunderkammer with a variety of natural objects, exotica and military artefacts, and remains the oldest English volunteer run museum (Bridget Yates, 2008).

1.3 Collecting for the masses

By the 20th century the notion of collecting became democratised: low-cost industrial printing processes, not only of mass-produced, non-functional and decorative household objects, but also of a wide range of souvenir artefacts were widely available. The development of publications to encourage people to collect, created an industry to consume the disposable income of the working classes:

Cigarette cards, at first produced in random bursts but soon in numbered sets, epitomise the trend. Postcards, too, at first a communications medium, were soon to generate the postcard album industry. (Rickards, 1977, p.12)

Steven Gelber (1999) cites a report in the New York Sun in 1888 that describes the elaborate methods of printing cigar bands, sometimes with 22 colours and an emboss so that "the "label is often better than the cigar" (Gelber, 1999, p.63) and which resulted in unused bands being sold directly to collectors. Changing their production from painted lantern slides to photographic postcards, Bamforth's were producing over 20,000,000 picture postcards a year by the end of WW1 (Bamforth Postcards, 2011). Along with the variants in postage stamps and commemorative souvenirs there was a plethora of affordable collectables available. The value of everyday objects was changing by the interest people were taking in them.

The burgeoning of collecting clubs of many kinds filled newly acquired leisure time.

In the 1920s USA during the depression, Gelber (1999) states hobbies:

... served to confirm the legitimacy of a world view that favoured more work over more leisure by turning leisure into work. (Gelber, 1999, p.42)

This notion of collecting being productive and supporting a strong work ethic is

evident in the Cub Scout movement, which promotes collecting as one of the key skills. It is seen as a way to demonstrate concentration and organizational skills and to expand knowledge. A 1979 magazine published by the Boy Scouts of America suggested spark plugs as a potential subject, citing 2,000 different brands that existed before 1940 as worthy of collecting, organising and cataloguing. (Ellen and Lewis Liman, 1979)

For railway enthusiasts "Railway Book Mania" (Carter, 2008, p.24) in post WWII Britain continued into the 1990s, but for the committed train spotter it was the guides by Ian Allen, started in 1942, which were the key publications. They supported and promoted the interests and activities of a generation of schoolboys. The ABC of Southern Locomotives published complete listings of all classes of locomotives, diagrams, numbers and names, and this data base of information is what enthusiasts used to tick off the engines they had 'spotted'. These are still in production and contain up-to-date information on aviation and other transport systems (Southern E-Group, 2012). Harvey describes the activity as:

... a hobby suited to the outdoor, adventurous type of youth someone full of boundless energy and not afraid to travel, sometimes hundreds of miles, with a night or nights away from the comforts of home.
(Harvey, 2009, p.1)

It is difficult to relate to collections of 'ticks' the excitement of adventure however sense of daring is evident: the activity also included 'bunking' which involved illegal entry to railway premises (Harvey, 2009). At this point the activity of collecting 'things' became an activity of collecting intangibles, listing and documenting, not in the scientific sense of recording natural species and types, but of day-to-day manufactured goods and services.

1.4 Collecting the everyday

In the UK The Mass Observation Society was formed in 1937 with the specific aim, stated in a letter to The New Statesman by Tom Harrisson (anthropologist), Humphrey Jennings (a painter and film-maker) and Charles Madge (poet and journalist):

to create an 'anthropology of ourselves', a study of the everyday lives of ordinary people in Britain. (Mass Observation Society, 2012)

In order to gather a collection of information, volunteer respondents were asked to submit written comments on topics set by the Society. Observers went out to collect data in the field; ephemera and diaries were collated into file reports. The Worktown study *The Pub and The People* (Mass Observation Society, 1987) gives detailed insights into the drinking habits and environments in Bolton in 1938: from the numbers of spittoons per table, drinking rates per customer, the types of hat worn in different rooms in pubs, distances walked by drinkers and how long they stayed in the bar.

This was the first time a large-scale study had taken place that put the general populace at the centre, and reflected the shift from ethnographic studies of other nations to a more reflective interest in the social world at home. This attempt to give the working class a voice was a political move by the left:

A major factor motivating the early Mass-Observers was their conviction that – as the dire conditions of the 1930s wore on – the common or average voice was being distorted or entirely stifled by the growing power of government and the media. (Lucy Curzon, 2012)

Studies by the Mass Observation Society also included attitudes to the material world with a call for responses to directives on, for example 'Commercial Advertising' (1938-1947), 'Shopping' (1939-1963), 'Drinking Habits' (1939-1963) and 'Happiness' (1938) (Mass Observation Society, 2012) and provided important insights into the changes in everyday lives.

In the modernist world of the early twentieth century, notions of aesthetics were also being challenged, and representations of ordinary life became "the concerns of avant-gardist ambition" (Highmore, 2002, p.19). The desire to reflect upon modern life to render unfamiliar the familiar, to disrupt and 'make strange' the everyday was the subject of Surrealist art, theatre and literature. Susan Sontag (1979) describes Kurt Schwitters' photomontage work as:

brilliant objects, tableaux, environments out of refuse, we now make a history out of our detritus. (Sontag, 1979, p.68)

..... The Surrealist ragpicker's acuity was directed to finding beautiful what other people found ugly or without interest and relevance – bric-a-brac, naive or pop objects, urban debris. (Sontag, 1979, p.79)

In May 1976 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, exhibited William Eggleston's photographic collection of everyday scenes in Memphis. These were the first colour photographs to be displayed as 'art' and were described at the time as "perfectly boring" and "the most hated show of the year" (Leica World, 2002). In the essay 'Irony is far from me' by Leica World, Eggleston described his approach as "the democratic eye" (Leica World, 2002). His work was reviewed in Art Forum, Matters of Record and was described as:

Giving form and its consequence-meaning-to visible data that in life we take for granted and forget to observe, or experience ... (Ingrid Sischy, 1983)



Figure 4: William Eggleston, Los Alamos

His observations of the world around him showed no bias or emphasis but through sophisticated production values with highly saturated colour he elevated the everyday content, making the familiar strange, documenting what Richard B Woodward described as:

... what was there, what no one else would even think of looking at makes something out of almost nothing. (Leica World, 2002)

This 'making of something out of nothing' illustrates the challenges to the established views of worth in visual culture and aesthetic taste.

The appreciation of the nuances and details of everyday life can also be seen through those who collect ephemera, what Maurice calls "Our times in scraps of paper" (Rickards, 1977, p.16). These collections are made not only to preserve beautifully produced artefacts of a bygone age, as custodians of the past, but can

also be of contemporary ephemeral items: King (2008), a self confessed collector of nothing, records that he has 800 paper envelope linings and he lists his 296 unique branded grocery labels from his kitchen store cupboard. This collection he describes as “tokens of all that I have personally touched as a consumer” (King, 2008, p.84) and form a unique personal history. These cheese or chocolate wrappers, with their gaudy graphics, are mass-produced, with no apparent value; King describes his motive as compulsive behaviour and not hoarding:

A certain chemical and physical and social and economical reaction took place when my hunger or thirst or need to blow my nose met their product, and that led to purchase. (King, 2008, p.84)

Robert Opie, who started with a teenage collection of cereal boxes and cigarette packets now runs a successful ‘Nostalgia’ packaging business selling a wide range of books and related facsimile products. Fragments of his daily life, he claims, give us insight into how society sits within a social and psychological framework, although this high ambition was not his original intention. 12,000 items from the original collection of 500,000 are on public view at the Museum of Brands, London (Robert Opie Collection, 2012).

Manufacturers of consumer goods exploit niche interests through the creation of ‘special editions’ and this trend is no better displayed than in the food sector. In an

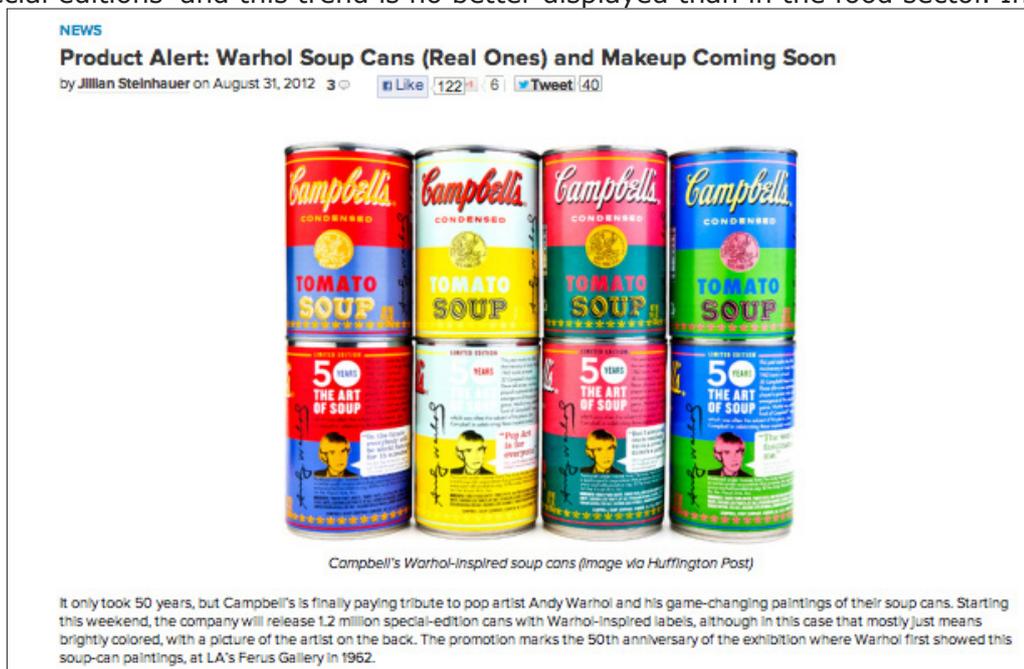


Figure 5: Campbell's soup special Warhol edition



Figure 6: Peroni commemorative labels for FIFA World Cup 2006

ironic statement about everyday consumer products, Andy Warhol's art in the early 1960s included painted reproductions of, most famously, Campbell's soup cans. In 2012 Campbell's paid tribute to the 50th anniversary of the paintings by producing their own commemorative soup labels (Figure 5) (Hyperallergic.com, 2012). Global events like the football FIFA World Cup (Figure 6), and the Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee (Figure 7) are platforms for 'collectables' of everyday grocery items, given special value by their associations. The souvenir editions are transient and appeal to the desire to belong to an event, to own the novel, and in the Warhol example presumably a sense of ironic pleasure. It can also be used to develop cult status of ordinary products through the "marketing ploy of the 'limited edition'" (Martin, 1999, p.9). In an attempt to appeal to the anti-brand trend, in January 2013 the upmarket store Selfridges launched their 'No Noise' range of goods (Selfridges & Co., 2013), with Marmite (Figure 8) priced astonishingly at almost twice its normal value of £2.55 (Lidl receipt, January, 2013) and which they say is: *showcasing modern minimalism at its best, this iconic jar of Marmite has been de-branded as part of the Selfridges No Noise initiative, celebrating the power of quiet in a world bombarded with information and stimulation. (Selfridges & Co., 2013)*

Pierre Bourdieu (1984) discusses the concept of cultural capital, the advantages of consumers who are more able economically or circumstantially to access and acquire goods over others. The collectors of intangibles with collections of no intrinsic value do not hold any cultural capital, all objects of these collections are



Figure 7: Queen Elizabeth Golden Jubilee Marmite



Figure 8: NoNoise Marmite

within the public domain and therefore equally available to all. Ben Highmore (2002) questions the validity of representation of the everyday as an object of study, in claiming something to be representative, when there may be better or more appropriate examples. He says one could argue that the everyday is already subject to real-time discourse and representation:

Then everyday life is neither problematic or capable of generating counter-discourses. It becomes merely a term used to designate an area already fully represented. (Highmore, 2002, p.21).

1.5 Collecting in the digital age

In the digital domain, possibilities for creating collections are limitless. Music and book collections can be stored with little drain on the wallet or digital memory. Websites such as *Blipphoto.com* encourage users to make collections of everyday life in photographs, 365 days a year, a visual diary, a record that can turn into a calendar or book with the click of a button. This comes with the pressure to maintain the input and there is an implied expectation to complete the project: a 365-day project requires 365 images. This public sharing of collections extends to *Facebook*, which passed 1 billion users in 2012 (Experian, 2012). It prompts us to share photos with our collected 'friends' as does *Instagram*, *Snapseed* and many other digital applications. In this crowded social media world we also collect 'followers' on *Twitter*, and share collections of 'pinned' images readily through *Pinterest*. Our newly developed dependency on sharing was demonstrated when the *Instagram* service was temporarily down due to powerful storms in June 2012 (CNN, 2012). For a number of days people took to posting messages on *Twitter*

bemoaning their loss of service. How could they eat without being able to photograph and share their food (Twitter, 2012) (Figure 9)?



Figure 9: Twitter #instagramdown 30/7/12

In using social media to create collaborative collections for typography fans The Design Museum, London, runs #fontssunday a *Twitter* hash tag (Design Museum, 2012). With a weekly theme *Twitter* contributors submit their font images, these are curated and uploaded to *Pinterest* (Figure 10), resulting in a taxonomy of original images sourced from around the world in a matter of hours.

In analysing the nature of this activity we can question whether this fetishizes the image. These images of the everyday no longer have the impact of Eggleston's groundbreaking work and as objects no longer have the aura described by Benjamin (1936). He claimed the contexts of the artefacts are lost in reproducible images, and even the capture of the image, the angle, and lighting, the precise recording has changed the nature of it. Debord (1977) wrote of media saturation for the masses that pre-dates the instant access through built-in phone cameras:

This is the principle of commodity fetishism, the domination of society by "intangible as well as tangible things", which reaches its absolute

fulfilment in the spectacle, where the tangible world is replaced by a selection of images which exist above it, and which simultaneously impose themselves as the tangible par excellence. (Debord, 1977, paragraph 36)

However this media has positive benefits previously unanticipated. For instance, #fontSunday is an interactive visual domain and produces a new view on the world through this taxonomy of typography. Social media brings together contributors to a community that would not otherwise have connected and provides opportunities to expand knowledge and for further collaborations.

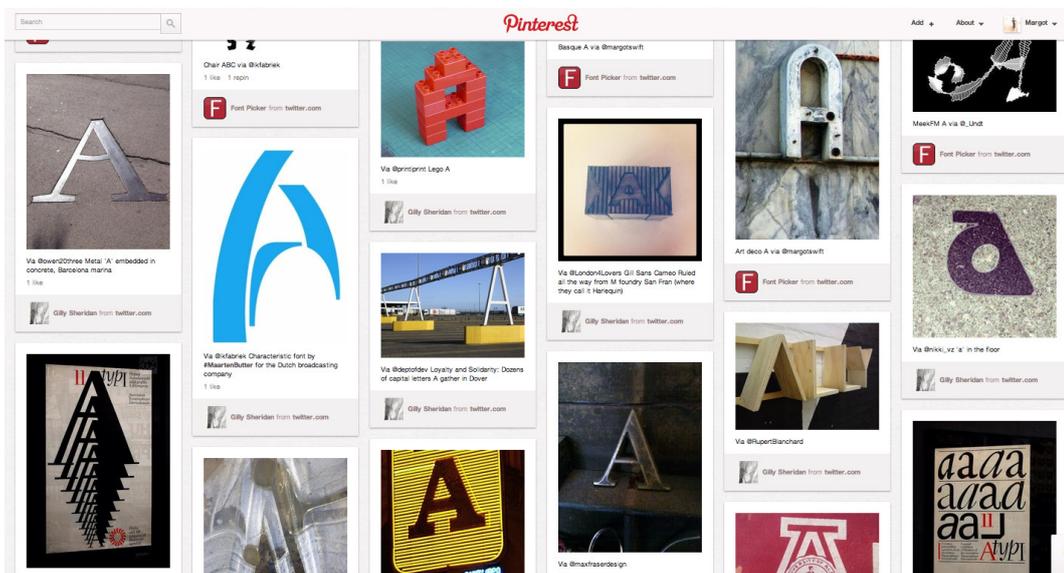


Figure 10: @designmuseum #fontSunday Pinterest page

1.6 Conclusion

We have surveyed the trends and historical developments of the motivations of collectors: the status that rare artefacts can give, reassurance and religious superstition, the search for knowledge and scientific endeavour, chasing novelty and the avant-garde. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries issues around mass consumption impacted on collecting habits. In the twenty-first century there have been new opportunities to attribute worth to collections through the development of technology and social media and the breaking down of the high cultural aesthetic.

The routine and humdrum have become poetic, making the everyday:

both ordinary and extraordinary, self-evident and opaque, known and unknown, obvious and enigmatic. (Highmore, 2002, p.16)

Collectors of intangibles are not obvious consumers of the material world, as they do not display the physical artefacts of it. This study questions what their relationship with the material world is and why they make the choice to collect intangibles. Miller (1998) states by studying the particulars of the mundane it is possible to “unpick the more subtle connections with cultural lives and values” (Miller, 1998, p.9). This study investigates the motives by examining; what they collect, how they attribute worth to their collections, and what drives them to continue? Chapter two will identify theories on collecting ‘things’ and how these issues relate to those collectors of ‘intangibles’ as a framework for comparison.

Chapter 2

Theories on collecting

Introduction

To contextualise the study secondary research the philosophical and social aspects of collecting was undertaken. Slater (2008) cites collecting as being a part of the realm of consumption and describes the analysis of consumer culture as “a spaghetti junction of intersecting disciplines, methodologies, politics” (Slater, 2008, p.2). He suggests that needs of the individual are the central issue of concern framed by aspects of commercialisation, cultural reproduction and identity. The investigation of theory was therefore broad and included: the history of anthropology as the study of observing human behaviour (Joyce (2010)); ethnography and social science methodologies to ensure that appropriate data is gathered, that it is ethically conducted and analysed critically (Hockey (2002), Bryman (2004), Van Maanen (2011)); material culture for the perspective on the impact artefacts can have, physically and culturally (Pearce (1998), Pink (2004), Miller (2010)); consumerism and collecting, how and why people may collect (Rickards (1977), Martin (1999), Belk (1995)); tourism and consumption of place in relation to the collection of artefacts (Campbell (1987), Urry (1995), Sontag (1979)); psychology of the collector (McIntosh and Schmeichel (2004), Carey (2008)); the divide between hoarding and collecting (Nordsletten and Mataix-Cols (2012)); philosophical standpoints and ideas of individualism and the self, objectification, absurdity, the spectacle and the need for self-fulfilment (Heidegger (1927), Baudrillard (1968), Debord (1977), Barthes (1972), Žižek (1989), Curtis (2002)); taste, aesthetics and cultural capital (Allen (1969), Bourdieu (1984)); studies into ‘the everyday’ (Highmore (2002), The Mass Observation Society (2012)).

To highlight the rhetoric around this subject of ‘tickers’ and identify the popular myths perpetrated about the people involved, books, trade journals, television programmes and films were analysed using discourse analysis techniques (Locke, 2012). Texts from newspaper archives from the 1950s and 1960s and a train spotter’s autobiography gave insights into historical perspectives and more recent articles demonstrated the change in attitudes. For example, from adventurous law-

breaking young men and rabid hoards of school children who had to be controlled by police on station platforms, train spotters had by the 1980s become ridiculed and stigmatised figures of pity.

Susan Pearce’s table of Critical Developments in Collecting Analysis (Table 1) demonstrates the multiple perspectives required to investigate the culture and activity of collecting. This chapter will consider how these issues impact on the motivations of the collector of intangibles, in the material world.

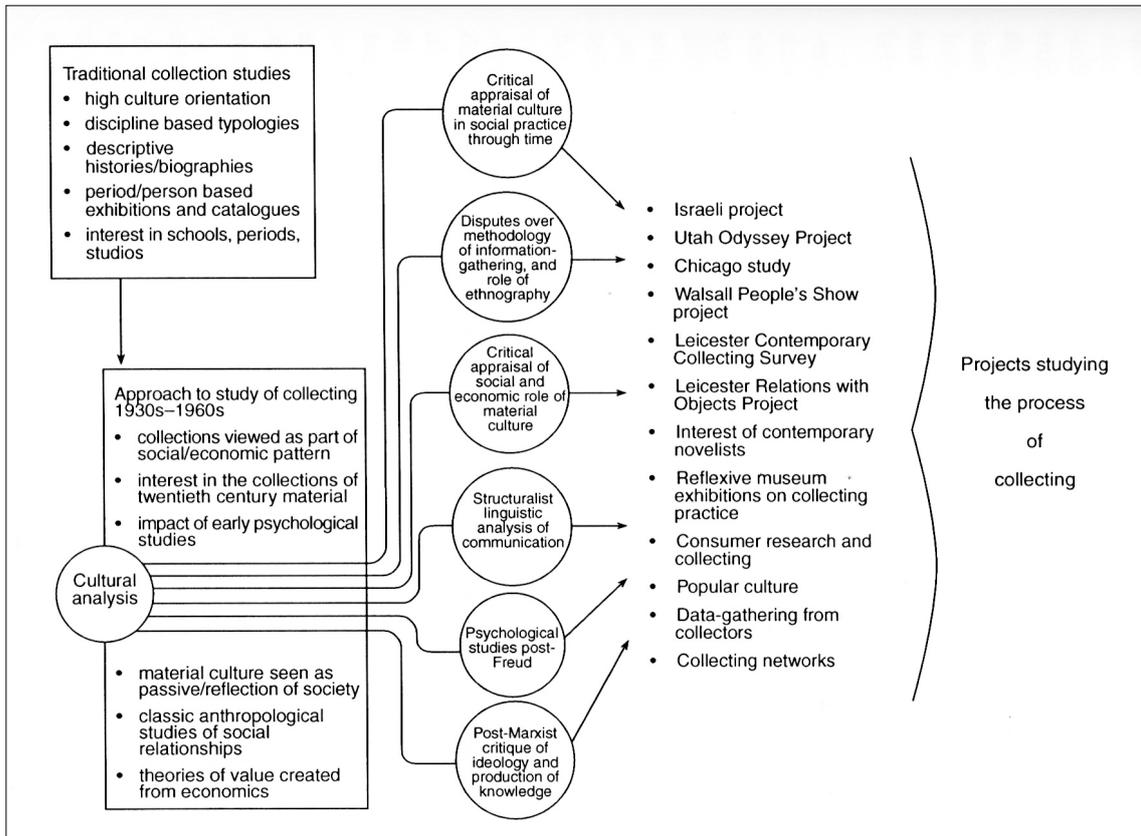


Table 1 : Pearce’s table of critical developments in collecting analysis

2.1 Collecting in a material world

The interpretation of objects and their meanings can be significantly different from one individual to another. Daniel Miller (2010) writing in *Stuff*, acknowledges the discomfort that people have with being materialistic, “Enlightenment is tantamount to the separation from desire” (Miller, 2010, p.77), with negative connotations of favouring things over people. In a move to a more secular society he does not believe that materiality should fill the void that religious abandonment has

brought, but promotes 'stuff' as ordinary and an everyday part of life, not to be idealised, but accepted as part of the world. His proposal is that we should be able to celebrate materiality and our relationship with it, without feeling the guilt of overconsumption. McIntosh and Schmeichel, however, regard materialistic collections as potentially sinister, with "a dark side" (McIntosh and Schmeichel, 2004, p.88) when the goal of collecting takes on an extreme materialistic focus. Miller (2010) claims that as non-industrialised societies engage with material cultures equally, collecting and an interest in materiality should be regarded as a natural activity and should be embraced.

Gelber (1999) identifies three categories of collector, the primary (those who collect artefacts specifically made for collecting such as Wedgwood vases), secondary collectors (artefacts created for another use, such as festival entry wristbands (Figure 11) and postage stamps), and intangible collectors where things are not possessed, but whose collections create a "life list" (Gelber, 1999, p.59). He points out that the former two are part of an economical system: primary objects transfer directly from maker to collector before being traded; secondary objects are transacted through intermediaries and have a life cycle that moves them into becoming commodities. As for the intangible collectors, he says they "may waste money, but they will never make any" (Gelber, 1999, p.59). If the collector of intangibles is not motivated by economic gain, either to make money or value the worth of a collection by trading and growing it, then why do they collect?



Figure 11 : Secondary collection : festival wristbands, university student

2.2 Collections as representations of the self

If collections are symbolic representations of the self then we must consider how a person determines this sense of self and how they construct significance of things. Heidegger (1927), in *Being and Time* discusses how things are meaningfully present and how, when all things are equal and there is no religious or hierarchical structure bearing over us determining positions, one has to make sense of one's own life. He questions whether subjects are responsible for their actions or whether they are an inevitable consequence of the influence of mass society. Slater (1997) says this is the key consideration: whether society is structured so that limitations are set on social groups and restrict their access and ambition or whether there is equitable access to all groups to satisfy needs. It is down to individuals to limit or define needs and wants in modern life, as society has become deregulated and:

the pursuit of interest as an end in itself is registered quite significantly in the sphere of consumption. (Slater, 1997, p.75)

Douglas and Isherwood (1996) recognised that consumption is an important signifier to the exterior world and that the motives for consumption relate to relative positioning within society. Collections are representations of personal control. Through collecting associated items, an alternative realm is created, where an interest can be "lived" (Martin, 1999, p.35).

How do collectors of 'nothing' share these positions, with no artefacts as a basis for the collection? Does what they collect say more about them? How does this position them in their social worlds? Why does the outside world see odd and strange behaviour in these activities? Could it be that this collecting behaviour is a variant of a consumption model, and they are more aligned to collectors of 'things' than may be presupposed?

Collecting, Martin (1999) says allows us to live in a fantasy world. Colin Campbell discusses the "generation of longing" (Campbell, 1987, p.85) and how daydreaming can take the place of real experience. In the modern form of hedonism, he says that the imaginary world of a daydream combined with the known pleasure of certain situations that exist in the memory enhance desire and pleasure can be experienced through the anticipation. Whether this anticipation and reflection is one of the motivations for the collectors of intangibles is a question for this study.

What motives are made by the collectors of intangibles must be established: are these collecting traits self-conscious actions, rationalised and deliberate as a choice against other distractions or hobbies; are collectors of intangibles making a deliberate anti-consumerist statement or are they subject to external forces affecting choices such as economics, peer pressure or family tradition; would collectors of intangibles claim to operate outside of the trends and industries built around satisfying collecting impulses and do they specifically use personal resolve to embrace to take control of their experiences to follow an independent life choice?

2.3 Aesthetics and taste in collecting

In defining their spheres of interest we must consider why the collectors of 'ticks' and 'spots' judge their collections worthy through taste and aesthetics. Pearce categorises types of objects collected in the diagram The Axes of Value (Table 2) (Pearce, 1998, p.41). She uses quality / rubbish and masterpiece / artefact axes to determine categories within a general survey of collecting practices. The term authentic here is used to denote the knowledge value of the artefacts collected,

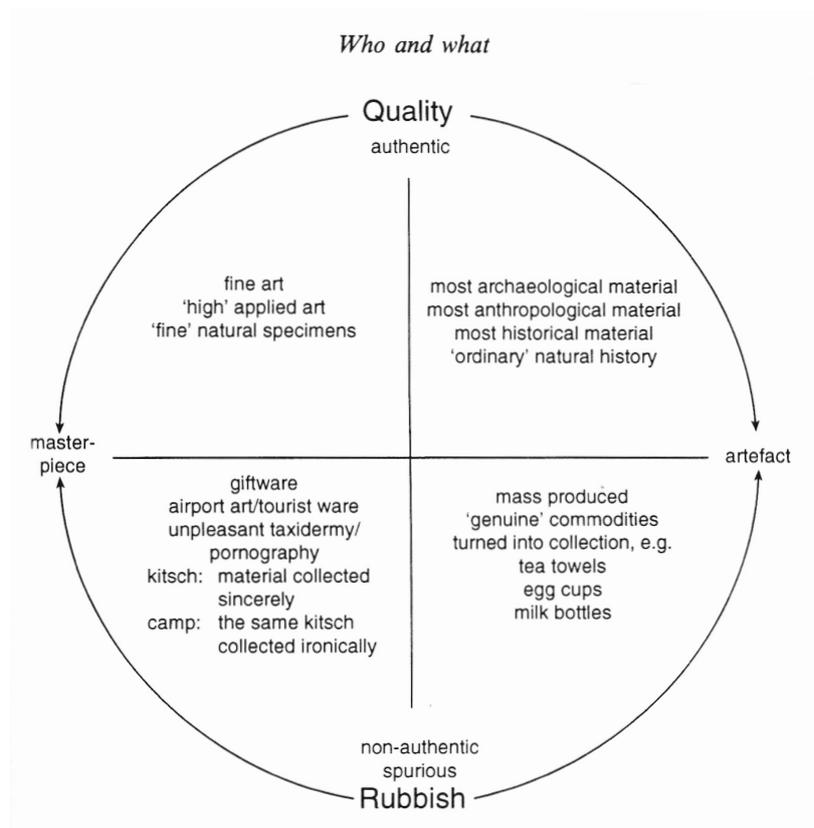


Table 2 : Pearce's Axes of Value

insights into the society in which they were created are deemed to be the key to authenticity. The more unique and difficult to attain is regarded as having more quality. In using this system, the collection of the bird spotter would be regarded as authentic, collecting real and undocumented scientific information to contribute to knowledge, whereas the bus spotter whose activity would be regarded as relating to mass production and the known realm of public transport would be inauthentic.

Bourdieu (1984) says that taste is a system of classification is determined by conditioning and is used to provide objective distance and distinction from others. The greatest freedom is the economic freedom to determine one's position. When the individual's preferred aesthetic is to collect the 'everyday' they are not bound by economic restrictions: their ambitions can be self limiting. By determining their own criteria they can protect themselves from the dangers of unattainable goals, and competition with others.

2.4 Collections as symbolic representations

The study of the social aspects of objects and the interpretations through authors such as Baudrillard (1968) reveal the symbolic representations attributed to things. In *The Systems of Objects* he discusses the functionality of objects and the connotations and myths that are created around them and how they change the gestures and relationships with people. He suggests that collectors of objects, through the complex and abstract activity of collecting, gain fulfilment:

the everyday prose of objects is transformed into poetry, into a triumphant unconscious discourse. (Baudrillard, 1968, p.93)

So, for example, if applied to the train spotter, trains would no longer be a generic transport system for getting people from A to C via B, running to a timetable and with engines and carriages of a precisely similar design to all other trains. They become instead an exciting mode of travel, running consistently, predictably, systematically. Seeking them can be an adventure, sightings are captured at a certain place, in certain light, in certain livery that makes an impression on the viewer that satisfies their own specific need. The functional object has become objectified. This construction, he suggests, is complex and specific to individuals who have the power to grant magical qualities to whatever they choose. Through the psychology of the collector, he claims, the selection of some objects over others or the selection

of unique objects, the collector is empowering himself. Tilley (2002) says this is a primary way in which sense is constructed of the world, and is what Gibbs calls the "poetics of mind" (Gibbs (1994) cited in Tilley, 2002, p.24) and understanding their agency on peoples lives can give us a clearer view on identity and culture.

Collections become commodities to be bought and sold. Slavoj Žižek (1989) questions why commodities are measured only by the amount of work used to create them. The values put upon collections of 'things' only have true economic worth in the market at the point of exchange:

a commodity is reduced to an abstract entity which - irrespective of its particular nature, of its 'use-value' - possesses 'the same value' as another commodity for which it is being exchanged. (Žižek, 1989, p.11)

Tim Dant (2005) has criticised the perspective that material objects are most important in relation to the forming of identities, groups and class. He is concerned with how people live with objects:

the tendency within the discussion of consumption has been to reduce material culture to a signficatory system and to focus on practises to do with desiring and acquiring obejcts to achieve social emulation and display status. (Dant, 2005, p.25)

The perspectives of Žižek and Dant draw away from materiality as the focus and are these abstract notions are important to consider with relation to the collectors of intangibles. If the value of work is only measured by it's resulting output, then the collections of intangibles could be regarded as worthless. However the investment of time and commitment and the engagement with the objects collected by the 'tickers' and 'spotters' suggest that other values apply for those individuals that are unappreciated by the collectors of things. Dant continues:

The way in which material objects provide a bridge between the inner pysche life of the individual and the social life of the world is not fixed but varies and may involve contradictory or reversible meanings. (Dant, 2005, p.63)

2.5 Histories and objects

The historical importance placed upon artefacts has changed over recent times, Miller (1994) discusses how, in anthropology, the traditional emphasis on the artefact and who made it, is being replaced by what it represents and collections

are put together with juxtaposed items as symbolic representations of, for example colonial power or romanticism. Histories are being documented increasingly by photography and personal narrative, which focuses interpretation of the construction of social identities.

King (2008) claims the life stories of the collectors are expressed through the metaphor of their collections. For the collectors of intangibles the documentary evidence of the collecting activity, the individual experiences and 'ticks', act as souvenirs, and manifest themselves through the production of ticking books, data bases and photography. These deeper interrogation highlights a more complex narrative than artefacts alone could signify. The object of the collection for the tinker transcends from experiences to classified data, which thereby creates another realm for the collection to exist: ultimately these are interpreted by the collector into systems of their own and their motivations provide insights into the modern world.

The complex interaction between objects collected and personal histories is discussed by Susan Stewart (1994) who elaborates on the distinction that exists between buying souvenirs and collecting:

In contrast to the souvenir, the collection offers example rather than sample, metaphor rather than metonymy. The collection does not displace attention to the past; rather, the past is at the service of the collection, for whereas the souvenir lends authenticity to the past, the past lends authenticity to the collection. (Stewart, 1994, p.254)

Grant McCracken (1988), cited by Dant (2005) focuses on the visible signs of histories of objects through the theory of how 'patina' developed to give social status and value. For the collectors of transport, who are viewing machines at specific points in their histories, would this material quality, denoting age and experience of the world, be of any significance to their motivations?

2.6 Collections as systems

Serial motivation is a key consideration for collectors. Baudrillard (1968) noted the propensity for collectors is to continue to accumulate when presented with a series, whether they are interested or not in, for example, all the books in a published set. King (2008) discusses his own serial issue, and how he was compelled to buy

all soups available in the supermarket: his family food consumption was directed by his desire to own all the labels, and suggests that the collection owned him and proved ultimately to be the opposite of empowerment.

Baudrillard considers the issue of completing collections and questions whether this would mean the death of the subject, whether this search for completion, "experienced as suffering", (Baudrillard, 1968, p.99) is a preferable state to keep the passion alive. He suggests we lose time through the activity of collecting, exist in dream-like states, and become absorbed and retreat to private environments with objects in a game of possession that helps one to cope with the inevitable journey from birth to death. People, he says, seek refuge in their objects, but their life can unfold in a controlled, symbolic way, which transcends the inevitability of death. By collecting as part of a series, he says, the on-going anxiety and pleasure of seeking and finding reconstructs the loss and reality of death in recurring cycles. It was important to ascertain the opinions of collectors on how they regarded the completion of their collection, if that was their aim at all. What would the impact be for people who constructed their lifestyle around the activity, such as 'tickers' and how would they adjust if their target were ever reached?

This returns to Heidegger's (1927) notion of estranging oneself to the familiar to be able to reach the authentic experience. Only by facing dread do you have a call of conscience and the meaningless has to be the basis for meaning. The absurdity of collecting 'intangibles' could be seen in this light, an acceptance of futility; recording a sense, a memory, a unique experience that has no obvious purpose to anyone else and will cease to be meaningful on death. This has different connotations to those collectors of things, who become preoccupied by who will take over the ownership and care of their collections after death (Belk, 1999).

"A discourse addressed to oneself" is how Baudrillard (1968, p.113) describes collecting and states that if the collection always remains private and personal that he (the collector) is "doomed to failure" (Baudrillard, 1968, p.113). He asserts that, in failing to relate to the outside world, the collector will never be able to articulate his collection fully, though he says most collectors do shift the nature of their collections in time, if only to be admired by third parties. For the collectors of

intangibles it was important to ascertain what 'success' meant to the individuals and whether there were any motivations in the respondents to leave behind a legacy. Would this be their lasting monument to their lives (King, 2008)?

2.7 Collectors in social groups

When collectors congregate the dialogue between them is an important signifier of their attitudes and behaviours. Barthes (1968) in *Elements of Semiology* says that each social group has its cultural artefacts. The coded actions, dress and writings of the community of collectors play a significant part in fostering a feeling of belonging for the individuals concerned, they enact a well practised system of rituals. However in *Mythologies* (1972) he criticises the *The Blue Guide* for describing men as "types", the Basque for example being an "adventurous sailor" (Barthes, 1972, p86). This is a common feature of contemporary writings about men who are 'tickers'; Paul Martin (1999) describes Freud's interpretation of perception of collectors as:

...adults as being anally retentive ... expressed in modern society by referring to someone as an 'anorak'. The anorak is a widely recognised signifier of bird-watchers, train-spotters and grown men who never left the parental home (Martin, 1999, p.35)

suggesting also that collecting is what people do in their adolescence as a replacement for sex and that they need to "get a life" (Martin, 1999, p.35).

These stereotypical viewpoints have had a negative impact on what was once thought to be a worthy pastime. Values of worth are socially sanctioned "where it was deemed to be self-improving, and otherwise condemned" (Martin, 1999, p.35). These feelings of intolerance to others can become vicious as people legitimise their own culture and "cast every other way of living into arbitrariness" (Bourdieu, 1984, p.49).

In general collecting socio-economic groupings span the range of society. Whilst Pearce asserts that around a third of the population are collectors and:

are not a different or, in any meaningful sense, a particular personally characterised group (Pearce, 1998, p.26)

she was not including the spotters and tickers of this study. Whether there were any characteristics, tendencies, habits and motivations common to this group would need to be identified.

William D. McIntosh and Brandon J. Schmeichel (2004) cite Saari (1997) as describing four 'types' of collectors: passionate, hobbyist, expressive and acquisitive; whilst they quote Pearce (1992) as identifying 17 motivations: *leisure, aesthetics, competition, risk, fantasy. A sense of community, prestige, domination, sensual gratification, sexual foreplay, desire to reframe objects, the pleasing rhythm of sameness and difference, ambition to achieve perfection, extending the self, reaffirming the body. Producing gender identity and achieving immortality.* (McIntosh and Schmeichel, 2004, p.87)

As they point out, most of these reflect the needs for self-fulfilment and enhancement. However are the activities of the 'tickers' reflected here? Work as play as is missing, hobbies as "the promise not of eternal leisure but of eternal work" described by Gelber (1991, p.743). He was specifically referring to the promotion of hobbies in 1920s America to maintain social order during the depression. However, collecting remains an opportunity to invest work ethic into some worthwhile endeavour (Martin, 1999). It is possible that, for some retired tickers, these activities would fill the void of work in the same way. Hunting down a 'tick' is a complex construction of planning, organisation, research and active accumulation (Parkin, 2009). Adam Curtis (2002) suggests that the manipulation of popular culture through the media has taken on the role of appeasing a potentially restless populace. It will be important to ascertain how the respondents view their own activities in relation to the other options available to them; are their choices a positive move to construct their own entertainment or a snub of popular culture?

Issues relating to gender are significant in collecting, as many studies highlight the contrasts in habits between the sexes. Pearce (1998) in the pre-internet / social media age conducted wide ranging research on the subject of collectors to determine national trends. She stated that in the population that collect, there is a higher proportion of women overall, but with significant differences between sexes, depending on the artefacts collected. This study is investigating the motives of a specific type of collecting of intangibles, and there was no attempt to gain a balanced sample therefore issues of gender are not specifically addressed by this study and the majority of those with collections of intangibles approached were males.

2.8 Hoarding versus collecting

In *Hoarding versus collecting: Where does pathology diverge from play?* Ashley E. Nordsletten and David Mataix-Cols (2012) discuss the extreme shift from “normative collecting” to “pathological hoarding” (Nordsletten and Mataix-Cols, 2012, p.165), and are concerned when an otherwise beneficial and healthy interest may actually have a negative impact on lives. With reference to Pearce’s (1998) research, in particular relating to the value of objects and the frequency of collecting, they claim the inability to discard objects and the special impact of the accumulation of artefacts can result in potential problems. The paper outlines the characteristics of the two activities, the aim being to inform the debate on whether or not a clinical diagnosis of Hoarding Disorder is possible. Ultimately they did not prove the case; large collections do not necessarily result in clutter, and the rituals of ordering sorting and caring for the collection suggest an organised accumulation as opposed to “obstructive accrual” (Nordsletten and Mataix-Cols, 2012, p.171). However, hoarding signifiers will be investigated within this study to question whether the motivations of collectors of intangibles were subject to hoarding tendencies. Nordsletten and Mataix-Cols also question whether collectors can turn into hoarders, and whether respondents considered conditions such as Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorder or Autism influenced their behaviour. These issues were addressed by a number of respondents in this study.

2.9 Conclusion

There was a notable absence of academic research pertaining to intangible collectors. This study questions whether collectors are motivated by: realising worth in their collections, impacts on their social identity and their levels of commitment to their collections. The research was concerned with all aspects of personal histories, changing times and moments of significance that have impacted on these collectors to reveal the nuanced motives of individuals and to identify the differences of and similarities to the collecting of objects. The final question for the thesis was thus determined: **To what extent collectors of intangibles have motivations distinct from those of collectors of material objects.**

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter discusses the primary research methods undertaken during the study including testing and sampling. The purpose of this study is to investigate the motivations of people who have 'collections' of intangibles as against those collectors of things. The primary research therefore includes both of these groups; interviews with the collectors of intangibles with some comparative interviews with collectors of things.

Secondary published research was conducted using: JStor, Summon, Epigeum and Google Scholar for books, journals, academic papers, newspaper articles and iTunes U for podcasts. Further recommendations came through one-to-one discussions with beer tickers and train bashers suggesting websites, blogs, videos and magazines. This provided the information on existing theories of collecting in Chapter 2, and also informed the methodology of this study.

Douglas and Isherwood (1996) suggest that surface communication of language is only one dimension of meaning, and other information relating to the time and space, demeanour and presentation are all denoters to consider. Therefore, observations of collectors within their social groups will also be conducted through a heritage train line trip, public house visits and several beer festivals, in order to reveal aspects of rituals and gestures that may impact on the study.

Bloom's taxonomy (UKCLE, 2011) is used as the foundation for gathering and analysing the findings: knowledge > comprehension > application > analysis > synthesis > evaluation, in recurring cycles, will ensure that there is a close relationship to the data throughout, allowing an inductive approach to development. The research method followed a grounded theory model.

3.1 Methods in the literature

It was necessary to study the specific methodologies of theorists of collecting practice to develop a suitable framework. In *The Comfort of Things*, Daniel Miller

(2008) used 100 household interviews, set in the intimacy of their homes. Miller's aim was to understand the meaning of the goods and the bric-a-brac of a lifetime's accumulation. This required a detailed observation and commentary on the situation itself in addition to the subject's life story. It raised the question of whether it would be appropriate to interview subjects in their place of 'collecting', or more insightful when they were at home and reflecting on their 'collection'. Miller's was not an illustrated book. The descriptions of the setting and the items were very precise, although anonymity was preserved. As my own previous research undertaken with students in NYC had been of a photographic taxonomy, his choice not to include a visual record of some of these situations in an age when image capture is so easily reproduced appeared remis, but raised the question of both method and ethics in published material. As Haraway (1991) cited in Rose (2006, p.5) states:

... vision in this technological feast becomes unregulated gluttony; all perspective gives way to infinitely mobile vision, which no longer seems just mythically about the god-trick of seeing everything from nowhere, but to have put the myth into ordinary practice.

The question of whether this thesis should be a visual investigation raised issues of social perceptions of the 'tickers' and voyeurism was to be avoided. If the investigation, however, were to specifically review a comparison of some of the methods or items 'collected', this would necessitate some record. The subject's interaction with their object could also be important; was it necessary to film the interviews or would still photography suffice; would it add anything to the context of this study? In Sarah Pink's (2004) *Home Truths: Gender, Domestic Objects and Everyday Life*, she describes her methodology, having interviewed on camera 50 subjects, and yet none of the visual content was used. Her aim was to elicit responses:

... not concerned with finding out the 'truth' about their lives at home, but with the ways that they feel they can be 'true' to themselves through the everyday sensory practices and representations that are part of these lives ... (Pink, 2004, p.7)

It is indeed the sensory issues that concern this study as well as the social context in which this activity takes place. Would the representation of the individual in visual form detract from the study, inhibit some of the respondents, and raise issues of bias from the reader?

Considering the issues of reflexivity and subjectivity, Pink argues that:
subjectivity should be engaged with as a central aspect of ethnographic knowledge, interpretation and representation. (Pink, 2004, p.23)

She sits the interviewer within the exchange process. Melvin Polliner and Robert Emerson (2001), however, discuss the validity of ethnomethodological indifference. The understanding between the subject and the observer in this study would be based on a shared understanding of cultural background, where there are assumptions made about the meaning of actions and words. The interpretation of activities would need to be understood in the context of the individual and their social situation, which would "document a theme which, in turn is used to elaborate the sense of the particulars" (Polliner and Emerson, 2001, p.120).

When considering the method of data collection an ethnographic approach appeared to be the most appropriate method. John Van Maanen describes an ethnography as work that:

conveys an argument and an informing context as to how these details and facts interweave. (Van Maanen, 2011, p.30).

Maintaining the narrative of the context whilst bringing forward the issues would be the goal. Whilst it would be possible to take some quantitative data through questionnaires, this has previously offered only limited content and approaching motivations of a personal nature would require a more intimate situation and more holistic approach. Jenny Hockey (2002) describes research interviews as a mechanical process of systematic selection of interviewees, often with transcripts handled by third parties and lacking, even with careful annotation of body language, a sense of the situation. Acting as a participant-observer would generate personal thoughts and observations in the field, which would be revealing of the social relations within groups whilst also gathering a rich set of qualitative data.

The thematic development of the motivations of collectors resulted from the pilot interviews using template analysis, by indexing, categorisation and coding to identify the important aspects of the activity. This informed the next part of the process, both developing ideas and reviewing the impact on the next round of interview / analysis. To allow a more detailed review of themes to emerge from the data, coding of some transcripts was undertaken utilising NVivo9 software

(Graham Gibbs, 2012). The emerging of multiple themes was grouped under subheadings to manage to complexity of the data and avoid repetition. This meant that unusual issues, group cases, key words and analytic ideas emerged, repetition was eliminated and codes were reviewed. It was important to ensure that, by using coding, the connections between ideas were not lost and did not become fragmented. Finally the general theoretical ideas were related to the literature.

3.2 Primary research: Scoping the study

Reference was made to a previous research project that had been undertaken in 2009. This was an investigation into how the student generation related to material

•	How much, despite individual intentions, are we all 'consumers'
•	Are they 'anti' organised, 'anti' commitment to clubs/sports/groups
•	Are they driven by the need to be 'individuals'
•	Comfort of things, are there deep or psychological needs
	<i>To belong to objects</i>
	<i>Self fulfilment</i>
	<i>Replace people and relationships</i>
	<i>Connections to the past and histories</i>
	<i>Compulsive / obsession</i>
	<i>Ownership and acquisitiveness</i>
•	Is this economically driven - would they do other things if had the ability
•	Is flexibility important, they can do something when they wish to
•	Do they require ultimate control unhindered by relationships
•	Do they like to determine their own goals and parameters
•	Is there a lack of any alternatives
•	Is there a simple pleasure in the activity
•	Is there peer pressure (or was there) from partner, family or friends
•	What personal investment is there - devotion to the cause
•	Is it a deliberate low risk activity
	<i>Economically</i>
	<i>Involvement with others</i>
	<i>Conflict</i>
•	Culture / counter culture / anti culture
•	Moral or ethically driven
	<i>Claiming back, rescuing</i>
	<i>Social responsibility</i>
•	Family historian, custodians, sense of duty

Table 3: Opening themes

objects, and surveyed the souvenirs that they brought home from a field trip to New York City (Appendices 1 to 5). For most of the students it had been their first visit. The purpose was to find out what they regarded as significant acquisitions, and whether these contributed to a collection that they already had. The research had been conducted using questionnaires by email and the effectiveness of these informed the approach for this study. A visual taxonomy had been created.

3.2.1 Pilot interviews at Winter Beer Festival 2010

In order to test the scope of the study in terms of potential respondents, initial interviews were conducted for purposive sampling (Appendix 6). It was agreed with the landlady of the local public house that afternoon drinkers would be approached to be interviewed about their collecting habits on the first day of the Winter Beer Festival, December 2010. A flyer (Figure 12) was distributed on the day so that drinkers would be informed of the research intentions before they were approached and so that they understood that they could chose to refuse the invitation if they wished. The flyer included contact details for any subsequent concerns, or future interest. A participant information form (Appendix 7) was given to them to sign, to agree to anonymous use of data or images through publication.



Figure 12: Winter Beer Festival flyer



Figure 13: Are You a Collector Facebook page

A Facebook group was also set up (Figure 13) as a reference point for further contact (also for people within the existing social network who may be interested in becoming involved).

The structured interview questionnaire was devised from initial themes seen on Table 3 and five interviews were conducted in the field.

3.2.2 Conclusions on scoping the study

It was clear from the interviews that the very different and specific criteria devised by the individuals were a significant issue in their motivation and certainly confirmed that there were multiple perspectives on collecting. As for the questions drafted, they were in some cases repetitive, in some cases too closed, some were in the wrong order or seemed ambiguous. There had also not been an opportunity to deviate if the respondent did, as the forms had insufficient room for lengthy answers. The age category was also flawed (at the top end from 50-70) and should have considered retirement age more closely, as that is when time was potentially more available to pursue interests.

The interviews took 40 minutes, not the '5 minutes' anticipated. This would be factored into future interviews. It was important not to rush the respondents and to give them a reasonable idea of how long an interview may take. The interviews were difficult to conduct in the boisterous environment of a beer festival. Note taking in the noisy bar whilst trying to engage in conversation was problematic and some additional perspectives may have been lost during the process. The responses from the questionnaires were written up within a couple of days, but the notes and

memos were recorded contemporaneously. This was to ensure that other aspects of the situation were duly noted, for instance, the importance of the banter-type interactions between the subjects. These proved to be useful aids to the reflective process.

The following findings and adaptations were made:

- a group situation required 'warming up', as there was an obligation to contextualize the study further. Extra time would be needed for this with unknown participants. An hour was allocated for future interviews.
- the questionnaire format afforded limited space to record what were information rich responses. A notepad with a list of question prompts was subsequently used. Interviews using sound recordings would have been impossible with the noise level so a controlled environment would be preferable in future.
- the interviewees were seated around three tables and so confidence grew within this group setting. They could anticipate what was going to be discussed. Friendly banter was generated between the interviewer and the subjects and also amongst the participants themselves. This was part of the social occasion. This reaction suggested that the participants saw the interviews as non-threatening and they were consequently candid with their responses. This also raised the question of whether being interviewed by a woman made any difference as they did seem flattered by the interest.
- it was likely that being in a group situation made the participants feel less intimidated than being interviewed on a one-to-one. Individual considerations of the best situations for future interviews would be required.
- the respondents were happy to have their beer ticking books photographed, though the lighting was not good. As the discussion was the priority the quality of the photographs was not considered to be crucial.
- the interviews helped to develop the questions for the subsequent, more open interviews, where template analysis methods were utilized to develop themes and the iterative nature of the process became evident (Table 4).
- the *Facebook* (Figure 13) page was not necessarily a relevant media at the time and keeping it active was a burden on the study, with little return, so that was not maintained.

•	Audio recordings of open interviews with a loose structure of points to cover - allowed for deviation and story telling - lengthy and time-consuming to transcribe
•	Small amounts of digital video recording where important to see handling of artefacts
•	Photographs of respondent's recording notebooks / diaries were taken
•	Field notes for each interview
•	Initial impressions, memos noting down the circumstances and observations
•	Emerging themes, main points drawn from interview
•	Full transcript
•	Checking transcript
•	Memos on developing thoughts and theories
•	Coding first transcript using initial ideas (Template analysis (King, 2012))
•	Subsequent coding of transcripts using NVivo (Gibbs, 2012)
•	Adding to coding where necessary, on reflection, new issues emerging, keeping close to the data
•	Re-reading transcripts
•	Reviewing, editing, expanding memos, categorisation
•	Discourse analysis (Locke, 2012)
•	Reviewing process to make more manageable, adjust technique to avoid unnecessary content, drifting off subject
•	Allow some planned interviews to go by the wayside
	Re-interviewing some after loss of data was good opportunity to check feedback with the respondent

Table 4 : Data collection and analysis

3.3 Testing other data collection methods

Investigating individual motivations meant focussing on the rich content of the qualitative data, and as a single interviewer/note taker this had not been difficult. Other methods were evaluated. Test interviews were conducted on film to see if this could be a useful technique. It was insightful to see how people interacted with their objects simultaneously with the discussion. However, the test revealed that people, even when known to the interviewer, were quite self-conscious: the presence of the camera seemed intrusive. The management of filming and notetaking was problematical when the subject moved off camera. The handling of overly-large sound/vision data files for analysis was, in the main, unnecessary. It became apparent that, as the focus was not on artefacts per se, photographic records could suffice along with observations. Some short clips of film evidence were taken using a hand-held camera in appropriate circumstances using a small HD Sony digicam.

3.3.1 Conclusion on data collection methods

Sound recordings would be the best way to document the interviews, allowing for a more relaxed and free-flowing discussion. Initial interviews using an Olympus DSS university digital sound recorder were problematic: unusual file formats, uploading and reformatting, having to wipe and rebook the equipment weekly impacted on the organisation. After some frustrations an Apple iPhone3 voice recording system was used. Where possible, a Livescribe™ pen was used for simultaneous audio and digital notes as a back up. Where appropriate, photographs or films would be taken to record artefacts. The interviews would be transcribed for template analysis and coding, and the use of field notes and memos would support the data giving perspectives of attitude, mannerisms and any general features of note. Transcriptions took 6 hours per 1 hour of audio.

The location of the interviews was a concern. The options would be to interview either on location (e.g. in the bar), when it was quiet, or at the workplace, home of the interviewees or the interviewer's home. There were also opportunistic interviews that occurred during the period of data collection, notably with a coach driver on a student field trip which involved a long journey to Birmingham (i.e. his place of work). This resulted in a mixed approach to locations, depending on the preferences of the interviewees. In some cases the choice of location was determined by the opportunity to interview respondents alongside their collections.

3.4 Selecting the study sample

The scoping study provided evidence that collectors of intangibles also acquired multiple collections including artefacts. To compare motivations would require interviews with those who only collect artefacts.

Theoretical sampling (Bryman, 2004) was required to allow the findings to emerge from the data collection process and allow adaptations and developments to occur during the process. This form of triangulation, bringing different but complementary perspectives (Nigel King, 2012), had to be evident in the study but it was also essential to limit the study to an appropriate size.

The sample was based on non-probability sampling principles, a mix of

recommendations and convenience sampling. In questioning the validity of using groups already known (local drinkers), some methods of other researchers into everyday life were revisited. Pink's (2004) research for *Home Truths* was conducted using a snowball method for recruitment: by using her initial interviewees to recruit further participants for the research, she achieved a sample of 50. Daniel Miller identified a particular London street as the starting point for his research in *The Comfort of Things* (2008), although some samples were drawn from side streets adjacent, and one or two random others. These people became aware of the study over a period of time and expressed a willingness to participate. His sample was of 100 households, but his published work describes that of 30.

It was appropriate, therefore, to take a sample from within the locality and not be concerned with identifying a representative sample of the whole population. The participants were in some cases from other parts of the country, people who happened to find themselves in the particular town. There were already people with whom preliminary discussions had taken place for this study, and who had expressed a willingness to discuss their passion for their collection through recorded interviews. The Winter Beer Festival group providing the pilot interviews were all from outside the local area.

3.4.1 Location: the public house

Interest in the topic had developed around a group of drinkers in a specific public house. The pub is not located within either a community setting or a town centre. It is on the edge of a ring road, near commercial premises and so not anywhere that anyone would describe as 'a local' in geographical terms, yet it has a regular clientele throughout the week. It is important to consider the environment of the pub, and what makes it an attractive prospect for the drinkers there. As Urry (1995) discusses, the complex factors of time and space and the interconnectivity with social relations make for specific atmospheres, which people relate to.

These are the factors which make this a convivial meeting point for a range of drinkers. Geographically this is a good location as it is on the main bus route out of town (many of the drinkers use public transport), with easy street parking. It is a free house and so individual in nature, with no brewery ties. The furnishings are traditional and unthreatening, with a warm and homely feel. There is a policy

of no television, no games and no music in the pub, which promotes discussion and debate around the bar. The bar area is large, with over 12 beer pumps with regularly changing beers (seven of these are single casks of 72 pints in volume can quickly run out and so frequently change within a single evening). The pub is not open until 17:00 during the week, and so is an evening drinking place, availability is limited to a six hour period. It is popular as an 'early doors' after work location; a high number of customers stand or sit around the bar on stools. There are a high number of single drinkers who join the general chat around the bar. The policy of selecting ales from different breweries around the country entertains and delights both a clientele of beer connoisseurs and ensures plentiful 'ticking' opportunities, forthcoming ales are displayed by their pump clips which are attached to a pole behind the bar, though not in order of 'next on the pump', enhancing anticipation. The landlady serves a specific market demand using an economic model that has high levels of variety at reasonable prices with a fast turnover. The pub holds four beer festivals a year (Figure 14) with around 80 different ales on offer over a five day period and attracts drinkers from all over the country and in 10 years the pub has served over 6,500 different real ales.



Figure 14: Summer festival pumps in marquee to the rear of the pub 2012

3.4.2 The respondents

Within this social space there were many interested and willing participants and it

seemed appropriate to approach these people, already known to be active as collectors and tickers. The validity within the sample occurs with the range and variety of activities that are considered essential to the study, but are not presumed to be representative of the population as a whole for age, gender or race. There is no variation of race within the group, which is due to the lack of evidence of drinking ethnic groups where the samples were taken. It is possible that either the real ale environment does not appeal to them, or that they do not consume alcohol for religious reasons: despite being a multicultural town the pubs are largely inhabited by white European ethnic groups. Whilst there are some women amongst the respondents, one of the few ticking married couples observed was approached but declined to be interviewed. The samples are designed to give some insights into specifics rather than generalities.

Of the 19 respondents (Table 5) over 50% were professional people, 60% were in long term relationships, 52% were born within 10 miles of the area, 21% were female, 13 main interests were noted and over 43 other collections as secondary interests, falling into seven categories (Table 6). Thus the sample had a spread of subjects with varied economic and social backgrounds and a wide range of activities and interests.

There were a couple of key informants who provided snowball sampling (Bryman, 2004) for the study. They were able to give contacts of other noted tickers, give background information about beer and football ground ticking, whilst also providing some website links and insights into beer festivals. Their critique was useful in planning the study and in considering different aspects of behaviour of the collectors. Ultimately they were both reluctant to undertake a recorded interview, both being somewhat shy.

3.5 Values and bias

It is acknowledged here that the development of the field of research sprung from a personal interest with a particular standpoint that offers benefits and potential disadvantages to the study. During the data collection process, the overt nature (this had been openly discussed with some respondents prior to interviews) and detailed knowledge of the modus operandi of some of the individuals meant that

Name anonymised	Born local/regional/national	Age	M/F	relationship	Socio-economic group	Main Interest	Secondary Interest
Paul	Local	<40	M	with partner	C1	Football stickers	Pigeon Rings / Bottles
John	Local	50-70	M	unknown		Pub ticker	Beer ticking / train spotting (lapsed)
Felix	Regional	35-50	M	Married	A	Beer ticking	Sheff Utd programmes-Le Mans model cars-Trains-Beer mats-Brewery info
Eric	National	70	M	Married		Beer ticking	Track basher-First Manchester buses-Trains stagecoach-5 bus companies - underground-trams
Sam	National	50-70	M	unknown	D	Beer ticking	some LPs
Jack	National	50-70	M	unknown	C1	Beer ticking	Track basher - buses - beer ephemera - Pubs
Annie	Local	50	F	Married	B	Eggs (lapsed)	Milk bottles (lapsed)
Geraldine	Local	47	F	Married	B	Beer ticking	Trading cards - fridge magnets - books - 60s pottery
Kerrie	National	40	F	Married	B	Trading cards	Computers - toys
Fidel	Local	65	M	Married	B	Ships	
Tony	Local	46	M	single	C1	Beer ticking	Books
Ben	Local	60+	M	Married	B	Beer ticking	Books - films - quotations - rocks
Alice	Local	60+	F	Married	C1	Elephant figurines (lapsed)	
Dennis	Local	55+	M	Married	B	Buses and trams	Beer ticking
Jason	Local	50	M	with partner	B	Birds	
Thom	National	55	M	single	C2	Track basher	Trains - beers - pottery - balsamic vinegar
Alan	Regional	49	M	Divorced	D	Autograph hunter	
Frank	Local	66	M	Widower	B	Chinoiserie	Train spotter - matchbox labels - birds - car number plates
Pete	Local	53	M	Married	B	Football grounds	
X	Local snowball	70+	M	single	E	Beer ticking	NOT SHOWN IN STATISTICS

Table 5 : Interviews at a glance

questioning was more searching earlier than may normally be the case. By adopting a naturally sympathetic standpoint this made respondents on the whole more confident, and feel less subject to ridicule. As a self-confessed collector of sorts, interest in the minutiae of the story and patience to wait for the detail to emerge proved advantageous in bringing out rich textural themes. To avoid the danger of preconceived assumptions, a semi-structured interview technique was devised

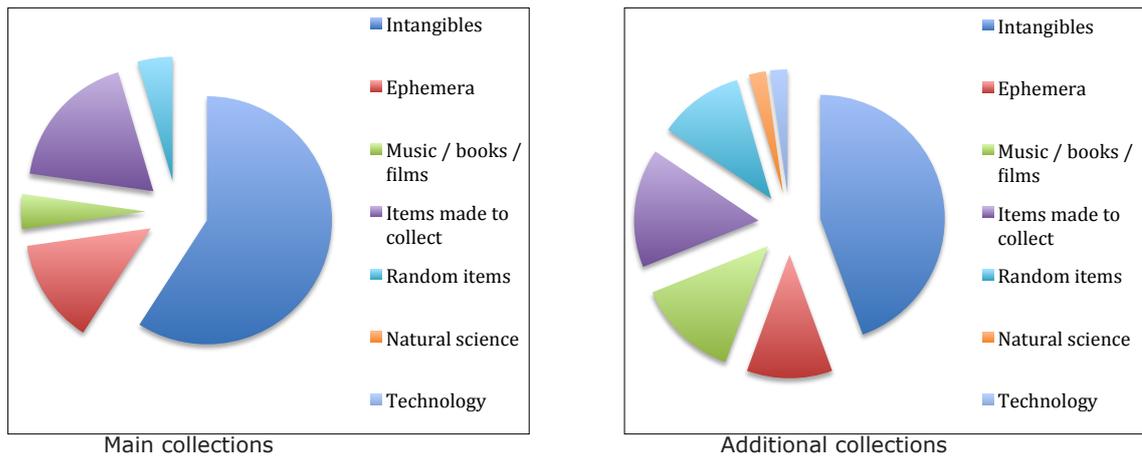


Table 6 : Categories of collections

which ensured that basic fact-finding was not lost in this participant-as-observer role (Bryman, 2004, p.301).

There is more to consider when self-reflecting on one's standpoint in the ethnographic process. Part of the motivation for the study was to understand my own collecting behaviour in the light of criticism from my partner, and the desire for some positive result cannot be denied. The imagined retort, "If you think I'm weird then just look at these people" as a justification admittedly fuelled interest. The fascination with people who like to be different is also prevalent, not of showy or exhibitionist individuals but an interest in the underdog, the low-key, or the understated. On conducting the first interviews any taken-for-grantedness that may have existed was dispelled, as it was discovered there was far more to the activity than had been supposed: early responses were enlightening and called for reflection and adjustment to perspectives. This was all part of the reflexive nature of the study (Bryman 2004). In some of the interviews there was a need to reassure and agree with statements to elicit further comment, but also to reaffirm a sympathetic standpoint. In some cases this became more of a discussion, as the temptation to share views rather than simply record them was too great, but again had the advantage of moving on from generalities with the respondents.

Although a female researcher, there were no specific feminist agendas in the research. The majority of tickers encountered were male and they did find it unusual that a woman would be interested in what they do: it is probably the case

that some of them would have felt flattered. The specific gender profiles of these collectors could be a topic for further study.

It was critical to interpret the respondents' behaviour through their social actions rather than make assumptions of the external factors that act upon them. This phenomenological approach will make sense of their world without preconceptions. The study will take an interpretivist standpoint (Bryman, 2004). The respondents were not only being asked what they do, but also how they perceive others, and also how others see them.

Through an ethnographic approach some understanding about the particularities and the multiple perspectives of collecting behaviour and of differing social groups was gathered. The investigation of these phenomena was to identify similarities, and reveal differences. The basic assumptions from the start were that the collections of the 'intangibles' were:

- of no financial value
- usually of no artefacts at all, sometimes recorded by photographs
- foundations for data bases
- highly individualized and anti-competitive
- classless not reliant on high income
- not subject to hierarchies within social groups
- not measured by success and failure

3.6 Conclusion

As a novice researcher there were many things to learn, including the importance of multiple backups. In November 2010 a laptop was stolen from the researcher's office which included seven interviews and related images which had been gathered that week, the machine was password protected and the data was not at risk, however valuable content had been lost. Subsequently six of the interviews were re-arranged, and this allowed the opportunity to review methods and questions (Appendix 11). Adjustments were duly made, interviews would be more focused, as some of the interviews had over-run and proved to be very time consuming. The wealth of data gathered, however, was rich and detailed and provided more insights than could be used in a study of this size. Selecting what to use and what to leave for further writings was a further challenge, as focussing on the issue directly of the motivations of the collectors was the critical. Chapter 4 presents the data from the observations and interviews.

Chapter 4

Observations and interviews

Introduction

This chapter will present the findings of the respondent interviews and field observations. The emerging themes (Appendix 10) will be presented using the following sections, followed by a short case study of beer tickers:

The collector

- early memories and choices of themes
- organisation and structure
- financial considerations

The collected

- variants: tangibles and intangibles
- the tickers' notebook and data transfer

Impact of collecting

- purpose and contribution to knowledge
- social impact, stigma and ridicule
- impact on personal relationships
- completion and death of the collection

Beer tickers, various modus operandi

4.1 The collector

4.1.1 Early memories and choice of themes

When asking the respondents about how they started a collecting habit, when they first got 'the buzz', of the 11 who were children (that is non-drinking related activities) the average age was 8.7 years. Even the collectors of intangibles had begun by collecting 'things' as a child.

Curiosity sparked for Paul, the collector of pigeon rings, whilst he was alone in the fields behind the house where makeshift pigeon lofts had been made from planks of wood and old doors:

Collections are very funny things, I mean why do you like something in particular enough to want more and more of it? I don't know, it was unusual, it would be 1978, '79 when I found my first pigeon ring. It was

still attached to the pigeon which had died and it had just a few bones left and the pigeon ring ... it was in one of the fields at the back and I did, as you do as a kid, just thought 'oh yes, that's nice' and I just put it on one side and two or three years later I found another ...

This collection has always remained private, he has never mentioned it to anyone else. The rings contain reference numbers and it is expected that these be returned to the owner to track the fate of the bird: this was his guilty secret. His other collection of Victorian bottles, by contrast, started aged nine or ten with friends one Easter, digging for shiny remnants in the old Carr Pit. His was a "disjointed" family and he liked to keep himself to himself. His father was a collector of what he calls "random junk" and a hoarder, he sees his own collections as having more intrinsic value, and claims there is no connection with his father's "magpie" thing, his own activity is more specific. His collections are more about discovery and chance. As an adult, he has collected football stickers (a collection which he can now afford to complete). For him, there is a connection between the element of surprise when opening a new packet of stickers and the excitement of "opening and unwrapping presents".

Frank began his collecting at primary school with the labels of foreign matchboxes, which he steamed off: he had over 100. His mother would take him away on holiday abroad on her Lambretta and the references to travel on the labels excited him. They were inexpensive and easy to store and he later joined a collecting club. When he was old enough he also went bird spotting, spending time on his own drawing them in the field. He was an accomplished sketcher and "loved the design of birds". He also liked to train spot with his school friends and would draw the locos when he went. He claimed this was nothing to do with memories, even though he does "suffer from nostalgia", but was all about the visual aesthetics of the subject.

In an effort to explain themselves, Felix and Eric drinking together at the Winter Beer Festival both suggested that their habits were from the 'collecting gene'. Felix went as far as to say that this was "as yet unproven by modern science", although neither of them had come from families of collectors.

Other individuals had key interventions from outside the family. Fidel, the ship

enthusiast, was fascinated by the activities of his Welsh landlady when on holiday aged around 5 years old:

... every time she saw a ship she picked up her binoculars and rushed out to see what it was and whether it was one of the ships in the village ... at that time a lot of the people worked on ships that were based in Liverpool that went all over the world and so she ... perhaps she was just a nosy parker, she wanted to see whose ship was coming home.

He then started 'spotting', using an Ian Allen (transport classification books) publication for information and he would tick the ships off when he had seen them.

It was the present of an Ian Allen book that prompted Thom to start train spotting:

I think it was probably train spotting when I was actually about four or five, ... well I was born in 1956, my first little Ian Allen train spotting books, ... someone bought them for me, in around 1961 so I was five year old, and I remember yeah lived near the railway so we had all the ordinary stuff during the week and then, come the weekend when, all the big expresses with the big express engines were all diverted past us ... And my Dad took me to see those

And was your Dad a keen kind of spotter then?

Not really, well I don't think so. He never professed to write them down. I think in the 1930s when he grew up there was just an interest in the trains but by the time I grew up in the 1960s it was, well people had started, like Ian Allen, had started producing books full of the numbers of all these engines so kids started writing them down and sort of underlining them when they'd seen them.

Geraldine, who became an avid beer ticker and multiple collector, started aged 6 or 7 by collecting pin badges as mementos of visits to castles and abbeys. None of her family were serious collectors but her father and her family would encourage her by giving her envelopes full of stamps which they had cut off from letters. Despite this lack of family habit (certainly none of her brothers were interested) she agreed with the notion of a 'collecting gene'. When young, her collections were private and for her bedroom only. For some time when her children were young and in school she developed her beer ticking collection alone. Now she has multiple collections of ticks for beer and buses, trading cards, beanie babies, fridge magnets and pottery. She shares these activities with Kerrie, her partner, and her own children, and sees them as an extension of her social life.

For Kerrie, having a private space as a child was critical. When in her teens, she would sit in a cupboard and order and reorder her collection of music magazines, absorbed and protected from the world. When she was younger, however, she had a collection of matchbox cars which she would hacksaw the roofs off: her mother had always wanted a cabriolet car. She wasn't precious about these possessions but did not like it when "badly behaved" cousins came to visit and broke her other collection of small scale model cars bought as souvenirs from holidays.

Ben's collecting, he says, was a reaction against a difficult family situation. His father died when he was young and his mother was "a bit of a heap ... obsessive ... a bag of nerves". From junior school he remembers collecting "nearly everything" and he would tick in the 'I-spy' books that were popular for children. He was an only child and describes his own room as a child being neat and tidy. He liked to keep his own space as his "bolt hole". Today he has a converted loft space at home that contains all of his collections (including beer ticking notes, rocks, scientific instruments, books and music) and where he writes up his lists, which document "everything I have ever done". He has annual diaries dating from 1970 but also keeps a Commonplace Book (Harvard, 2013), which he says, helps him in "making sense of the world".

Most respondents said they perceived collecting was something everyone did at some stage. Pearce (1998) suggests that 30% of the population are collectors of something, but what makes these enduring interests continue into adulthood? Baudrillard (1968) suggests that collecting is an early attempt to master one's world, that the habit wanes at puberty and that many people return to this in their 40s "falling victim to this passion" (Baudrillard, 1968, p.93). Numerous respondents discussed periods in early adulthood when they gave up their interests, only to return to it later.

The bird spotter Jason, in the opening quotation in Chapter One, had his own private moment of magic, when he spotted a migrant Redwing for the first time in the garden aged eight or nine. He described his return to bird spotting later in life:

I went through teenage years as a normal teenager ... in a band ... drugs ... but it was something I could come back to then in mid to late 20s and I did because, it was always there in my head.

Similarly Fidel, who no longer visited the Welsh coast for holidays and went away to University, had a dormant interest reactivated:

... as you get older you get more interested in what things are rather than just a list of number or names shall we say actually [active] interest waned and other things took over but I always maintained the interest and always bought the magazines and things like that ... And then really my interest was rekindled when ... my mother died in 1977 ... I had to go ... and visit her in hospital for quite a long time and then look after my father and, the ships were there again and the interest was rekindled.

Tony claims not to be a collector, although aged around 13 he was interested in Punk / New Wave Music and would search out the older records from market stalls. He would also buy new versions from music shops, resulting in multiple copies of the same records. They would be filed in a box in alphabetical and chronological order. This became something of a competition with his school friends. They would "get word" that something was available and each of them would try and get it first. He stopped collecting when he got other interests. Despite having a collection of books which he sold when leaving the country to live abroad, he does not regard material goods as important and cannot understand keen collectors of, for example, stamps. In his opinion, such people collect "for the sake of it". His social life and the circles he moves in helped to start his own collection of beer ticks, which he does not care to admit to openly, not wanting to be regarded in the same light as others. He claims it is an accidental habit which grew from a developing interest in the taste of different ales and was coincidental with the growth of microbreweries and the widening variety of imported hops.

Annie's collection of eggs, which began at the age of 12 and which grew to around 300 in total, was abandoned when it became too difficult to display them all. They simply took up too much room. They were packed away for decorating and are now in the cellar, save for half a dozen favourites on the mantelpiece. Similarly, Paul's collection of 300 or so Victorian and Edwardian bottles, which he started aged 9 or 10, is on hold due to storage issues. They have been in seven packing boxes since he moved house. They once took pride of place on his eight feet long kitchen table but now, he says, he will have to negotiate their fate with his new partner. His current collection of football stickers is somewhat easier to manage.

4.1.2 Organisation and structure

King wrote "To collect is to write a life" (2008, p.38) suggesting that the collection forms not only a monument to a collector, but also that their personalities are displayed through the acquisition and display of them. When asked if this was something that she related to, Geraldine replied:

Yes, I think that deciding what you collect perhaps signified parts of your life and where you are, how you are feeling, your happiness, your sadness, and that.

The potential to follow an interest that is self-directed is a very significant factor for all collectors, although there are different drivers that help to build collections. For Annie and Alice, the egg and elephant figurine collectors, their acquisitions (excluding gifts) related to places they had been to and formed memories in a physical form. They were discovered during a visit, they may have been looking for new examples, but they did not travel specifically to find them. The interest in these collections is in the taxonomy of types. Annie describes her pleasure in observing and handling the eggs: the differences in texture, feel, size, intricacy of design and the materials they were made from. Her other collection of milk bottles with advertising slogans from the 1980s were delivered to the doorstep by a friendly milkman, who could see from her student kitchen that she liked them and so he looked out for good examples for her. Others like Paul only consider collectables worthy when they have been acquired by themselves. He talked about how he felt when his sister bought him an antique bottle as a Christmas present, and how he did not want to display it as part of his own collection. When, in a quest to get bottles from all the old breweries in the area, he bought 20-30 on eBay he said it was "against the grain".

For the more driven collectors, their whole social structure can be dictated by the pursuit of their collections. For the collectors of intangibles a trip to gain 'ticks' requires a certain amount of pre-planning, whether it is to ensure that the beer festival is open and will have some new beers left by the time you have travelled half-way across the country, or whether it is arriving in time at the docks when a fleet of ships is due to arrive from Russia. Most of the beer tickers will use public transport, as the levels of alcohol they consume would rule out driving themselves. Brian Moore, the Champion ticker, admitted to selling his car as he no longer used



Figure 15: Real ale pump clips displaying train themes at the bar

it (Parkin, 2009). Good knowledge of transport links and timetables are critical, and it is certainly true that many of these beer/transport interests cross over (Table 5). Sixty per cent of the beer tickers were also interested in bus, trains or track bashing (collecting track lines travelled). Whether this is by accident or design depended on the individual. John had shifted his focus:

[I] used to be a train spotter until it became uninteresting, the engines were no longer distinctive. [I] now concentrate on pubs, beers are a coincidental collection.

As a multiple collector Geraldine saw an opportunity to gather up different information on each trip:

No the buses were just, just buses, yeah numbers, just like Dennis, did you not know that I collected buses as well? (laughs) Again, that was a very completest thing, once you cross off, you cross off the main one, ... and also you can plan your journeys and go out ... the same with the beer, you can go to this town, try and see these buses here, we know they are coming in here, go to the bus depot, we use to write to the bus depot and say 'can we come and visit you' and all that sort of thing, because that's obviously the best place to go.

As a very focused and competitive ticker, Jack is aiming to complete his collections in his (early) retirement. He has completed nearly all the UK railway lines already and he claims to be one of the top men in the country with 90% of all buses ticked.

He has 'done' nearly all the pubs in the country and has 26,000 beers under his belt. He has just returned from a trip to Scotland on an 'eight-day rover ticket', specifically to swell his collection.

Tony, the reluctant tucker, admitted that over the past 10 years he has developed a daily routine of visiting pubs that satisfies not only his social needs, but allows him to develop his aesthetic appreciation of beers. He likes being greeted as a 'local' and wouldn't go into a pub if he wasn't going to find a welcoming social situation. At the beginning of the year he started to record beers from his favourite breweries, ones that may be "interesting" and "never agains". He does not want to drink beer simply because they are new, and does not understand why "avowed tickers" would drink something which they did not anticipate would be good. In addition to his regular routine, he will take specific days off to sample ales and will even travel abroad as a beer tourist, but only in search of pleasure "I'm fussy about what I eat and I think beer is part of cuisine - another food stuff".

Now adopting a completely opposite perspective from his younger days, Ben, in retirement, no longer chases beers across the country and likes to manage his ticks around his daily life. He would not dream of taking a trip somewhere simply to tick beers. There has to be a more worthwhile incentive for him, he does now think of this as a secondary rather than a main purpose in his social life.

Whilst the beer tucker has multiple opportunities to find new ales, the bird spotter on the other hand could set aside time for his search without guaranteed success. Responsiveness to the opportunities that may arise is more critical for them as rare sightings can occur randomly and anywhere in the country. Jason clearly explains the importance of the need to be able to react quickly to gain results:

... those days when you had no technology there, well you'd read about it in the newspaper and ... by the time you'd got it, it'd be three or four days out of date or sometimes weeks out of date, but you'd go anyway. There was no pager system, there was no telephone system, there was no, obviously no internet, so you wouldn't know, you would just go and so ... these days I miss birds by 10, 10-20 minutes, in those days I'd miss them by 10-20 days! (laughs) You'd turn up and they'd say, "what are you looking for", "oh such and such", "OH, that went bloody weeks ago!" (laughs) I mean it, seriously that's how it used to be and I

mean you'd driven two, three hundred miles and you'd be thinking, "this hobby really needs streamlining by someone" ...

4.1.3 Financial considerations

In order to pursue his collection Jason has opted for a relatively undemanding working life that allows for free weekends and a flexible attitude to short-notice holidays. However, all his interests do not lay in the rare sighting or in completing the 'big list', like many of these collectors, he has sub-lists and more local targets that can be economically gathered: work list, home list, 6 county lists, British and Irish list, world list, high arctic list, year list and life list. He is still actively spotting whilst driving to work and sitting at his desk.

Eric is a bus/tram spotter but also a beer ticker. However, his motivations regarding these two activities are quite different. He invests in visits to London 11 times a year with three friends in pursuit of his bus and tram spotting. He enjoys this collection because he knows precisely how many more buses and trams are missing from his collection as this information is published. This is not the case regarding beers. Despite having 21,134 beer ticks to date, he claims that if he had to stop drinking he would not mind in the least. For him, beer ticking is all about "real time sharing and no more than that. It's all about the trip off" which includes his day-to-day habits.

It was observed that many of the local beer tickers were in contact with each other by mobile phone and would alert fellow drinkers at other pubs that new beers had become available at the bar. They would often maximise the opportunity and head off to sample them before the barrel was finished. This local level of communication has increased as the costs of phone texts have reduced markedly over recent years. Jason pays a £250 annual subscription for a phone app which sends bird alerts. He can get up to 150 a day but the value is high per 'spot', as many of these would be for birds he has seen before:

If something's been seen less than 5 times in 10 years then it gives an extra high alert call so you know to go to it, this is going to be something really good.

He says these are expert sightings, and not hoaxers who are "stringing something",



Figure 16 : Beer festival, two breweries beer-off in York.

“there’s an awful lot of mistrust” and it is a high financial risk to follow a false trail as the distances people will travel for sightings can be a couple of hundred miles.

Whilst the birder has to wait for the natural world to supply their sightings, the beer tickers can set their own targets and work at their own pace. The real ale market provides a ready supply of goods and dozens of beer festivals nationally to satisfy the demand, at a reasonably consistent price per pint of ale.

Jack drinking at the 2010 winter beer festival, who was also a track basher, was in the ideal situation of having both the time and the finances to support his collecting habit: he had taken early retirement with a good pay off and pension. It is undoubtedly the case that the more financially well-off are more likely to ‘succeed’ if seeking to compete with others in the race to a certain number or goal. However, only two respondents out of the 19 admitted to any kind of desire to compare their results with anyone else, although all the tickers are likely to be aware of the numbers of ticks of others if they are significantly high.

Thinking of value for money, Thom, a track basher reflects on money well spent:

Oh I’d hate to think, if I’d have saved what I’d spent, mind you if I hadn’t spent it on that I would have spent it on something else. Some folks spend all their money on racehorses or gambling I’ve never, I’ve never set foot in a bookies in my life.

Being unmarried (although he did live with a partner for 8 years) and in a good financial situation Thom has been able to travel the world on railway lines with an

organized group. He's been to Argentina, across Europe, Australia and he combined this with looking out for new beers and breweries. Thom has a different view of his Moorland pottery collection of over 80 pieces, some of which cost a couple of hundred pounds. Whilst he calls this "an investment" he has stopped his collection as he "got a bit tired of it these days", he would buy from new but:

I call it [Moorcroft] an Empire now 'cos it's gone too commercial for me now, if I see a nice piece I'll buy it but I'm not going mad for it like I was.

Felix reflected ruefully that he has similar desires for artistic objects:

[I] Have cut down in recent years, but would like to collect everything but not enough room or money. If [I] had the money [I] would like to collect paintings.

For Jason, the bird spotter, the influence of changing costs has significantly affected his opportunities:

Well the economic climate has played a big part in that, I mean yes, I used to 'year list'. I did one year when I'd got over 300 in one year, it cost me an absolute fortune, I had a friend who was doing it as well so we split it, the cost I never documented how much it cost, so that's stupid, I should have done just to see

Well yeah, in those days [holidays] they would be abroad, I'd go to America, I'd go to the Mediterranean, I wouldn't be spending my holidays doing this, this was for long weekends, I mean you'd get to Shetland and back in a weekend if you could afford ... so I used to sort of put so much money aside for this, but nothing was as expensive as it is now, unless you can fill a car these days then, you know, even a trip down to Dorset and Devon is, is ridiculously expensive if you're a millionaire and you're not needing to work then no problem ...

Geraldine admits to having to be "reined back" by her partner. When she was in "that kind of collecting mode" she would be on the computer on eBay everynight searching for Poole pottery and bidding for things but it became "quite expensive". Whilst she'd like to buy more, she knows that she can't justify it, and the same happened with the trading cards. The beer ticking is a part of her normal day-to-day socialising and expenditure and so cost is not an issue.

4.2 The collected

4.2.1 Variants: tangibles and intangibles

The nuances and variants on what people can collect is limitless, as can be seen in Appendix 12. As Sam the beer tucker said "The rule is that there are no rules in beer ticking", and indeed there are none in collecting, so whether one's preference is for bottled American beers, pubs with names related to Kings and Queens or beer mats from Yorkshire breweries the choice is yours. It was discovered through the interviews that 80% of the respondents did collect more than one thing, often but not always linked to the same theme. Two of the beer tickers also collected Breweryania, reflecting an historical interest in the subject. It was notable that the train buffs were not necessarily interested in historical engines and took more interest in the functional aspects of transportation and it's the very changing nature of the industry that keeps them interested. For the majority of these collectors the motivation is not to complete the collection as new stock is constantly being introduced and there is an acceptance that things change. They are studying a live and developing resource although numbers, as Eric said, "are finite at any one time". Fidel was interested in commercial shipping only, but did not like container ships as they did not have interesting visual variations "like everything else, everything becomes standardised".

Five of the multiple collectors admitted to being compulsive characters. Eric just liked to tick and was quite flexible on what that could be:

At one point I had seen pretty much all there was on the railways so I thought of what I could do, for example, taking all internal UK ferry journeys. It doesn't really matter what it is, as long as you can get out and do it.

Ben, the multiple tucker, admitted to being driven by a big burst of enthusiasm, a thirst for knowledge, which starts with some obsessional behaviour, "I can't stop myself, I love it, it gives me a buzz". When his curiosity in one field is sufficiently satisfied he then moves onto a different theme or direction. His choices have been driven more by his lifestyle rather than the other way round. For example, when he was living abroad he had collected geological rocks, becoming very interested in the chemical structures. He is known amongst his friends for getting new "passions". Beer ticking, however, remains a constant theme.

4.2.2 The tickers' notebook and data transfer

The tickers' notebook is an interesting functional object that transforms into the collected artefact with the input of data from field trips. Their physical attributes are positive choices made by the collectors about the nature of the book, its size, format and appearance, they are important to consider as these are how the tickers interact with their collection physically.

A variety of ticking styles were observed: people who use notepads, Filo-faxes, pre-printed files, mobile phones and Blackberries. Whilst these are the formats for field



Figure 17: Dennis, multiple ticker with 4 different recording systems

notes, the data is often re-entered and collated back at home into systematic filing systems or onto databases, although some simply remain stored as primary data in the notebooks with running totals noted page by page.

The preference of format is selected for functional reasons: a convenient size to carry in a pocket, although some carry larger items around in bags; to have sufficient space to write the relevant information, some in lots of details but some as brief notes; some to hold pens and also to be readily available to buy when replacements are required (Figures 18 and 19). Eric had bulk purchased 15 years supply of green notebooks to ensure that they all matched, whilst Dennis favoured the police style notebook which he used when he was working. Fidel needed notebooks that were wind-proof when he was spotting ships on the shore. The notebooks also need to be easy to store, as most of the tickers keep their original data (Figure 19), even when it is transferred onto other databases or paper sheets (Figure 18 top left).

Some of the tickers use pre-printed lists that are available and constantly updated with current information such as The GOBBS guide (Guild of British Beer Samplers). Beer tickers will underline beers they have tasted or make additional notes in the file (Figure 18 bottom right). This is a more bulky item and requires regular updates when new beers are released and these are available through the post.

These examples show the dedication that is put into record keeping, neatness and order, consistency and clear criteria are critical. The systematic upkeep of record was deemed critical and some respondents became stressed by mountainous backlogs. Fidel had supermarket bags full of photographs in his office. Sorting them into order was to be his retirement project, which, it is sad to say, he never completed as he died within a year of the interview. Geraldine did not have an up-to-date number for her ticks, she estimated it would be between 10,000 and 12,000. She had to abandon counting a few years before, but intended to catch up on filing soon.

For some, they had specific days when they would handle the data transfer onto a PDA (mobile palmtop computer) or a computer at home. Jack allocated a day a week, initially he marks up in The GOBBS guide, then transfers onto a spreadsheet

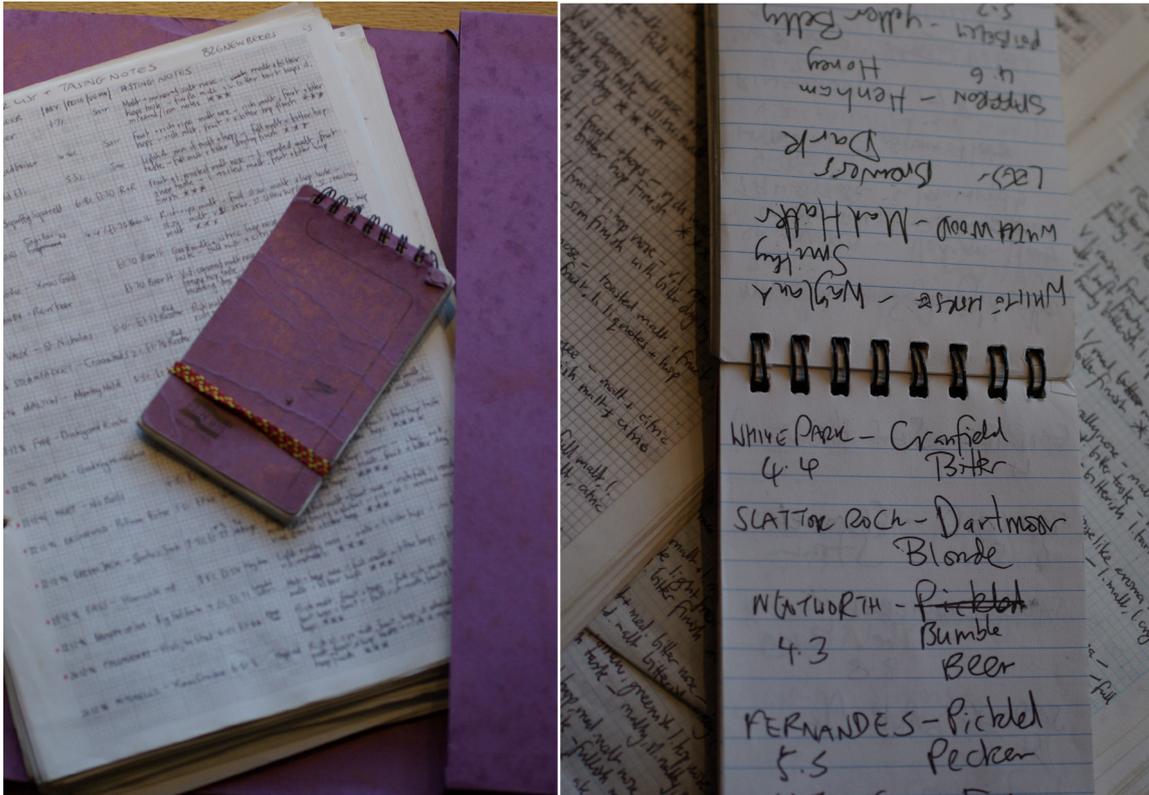


Figure 18: Geraldine's systematic, colour coded storage

and then onto a Palm Pilot. Jason, the bird spotter, decided to cut out paper field notes altogether and access his information via the iCloud so that it is readily available at all times:

I don't have the note taking because it's all just on there (points to iPhone). There's even an app now where you can draw the bird, you can select the bird shape, right, you tap on the parts of it and colour it in and it will then go online and identify for you Yeah, I use Dropbox and Evernote and stuff like that so yeah, I can access it if I'm on holiday anywhere, most places these days have got Wi-Fi so yes I can just. Yeah, it's brilliant for photographs as well as I can just see my photographs there.

4.3 Impact of collecting

4.3.1 Purpose and contribution to knowledge

For some of the respondents, the ability to photograph and publish the images is a bonus, both financially and in terms of self-publicity. For others it's an integral part of the activity. Thom, the trackbasher, discussed a couple of friends of his who are very active:

I've a mate of mine that does do it and it is financially rewarding for

him 'cos he writes it all up and gets stuff printed in magazines and what have you so he's very good

Do you ever send your pictures into journals or ...

Can't be bothered, I'll leave it to other people, I know I see I go on some of my trips and I see pictures that I recognize and I think I just about took that picture and I think "ah yeah, X", X took that one, ... took that one they're in for it but I can't be bothered, it's not for me it's not my mate X, He likes to see his name in actual lights. I used to get really brassed off with him at one time And oh god, the self-bloody aggrandisement, I said will you bloody stop doing that! It really pisses me off.

Even when talking about the ubiquitous town bus, there is merit in photographing it in its natural environment. Whether published or not, the pleasure for Dennis was in the subtle variations for the tick:

By having an interest in buses and beer, it meant that I didn't always have to drive. I would drive to certain locations to gather 'ticks', but also it was good to get off the main routes. There are good photo opportunities of getting buses in locations, coming out from bridges, or with other buses behind, that was more satisfying than just going to a depot. There's a good spot in Lincoln where from the bottom of the hill you can get a bus and the Cathedral in the same shot, which looks pretty impressive.

Fidel had sent photographic contributions to shipping magazines and received publication fees which had helped with the cost of his developing the pictures. He



Figure 19: Bus location shot on Dennis' camera

some of the crazy things that he had witnessed in the past such as fights which had broken out at bird sighting locations, people vomiting and twitching in anticipation of a sighting. This would have been a unique record of social history.

For the beer enthusiast, blog sites are also a popular outlet for opinions on tastings and the latest brewery news. The beer blog (Figure 22), edited by Dennis and his friend, has registered an impressive 27,635 visits from across the globe from 28 March to 12 December 2012.

4.3.2 Social impact, stigma and relationships

The long traditions around collecting culture have been discussed in previous chapters but here we are considering whether the world of intangible collecting is really divorced from the 'normal' social and economic world, and why it is regarded as different. All of the collectors have some dependency on commercial activities:

- transport spotters buy Ian Allen guides and timetables
- beer tickers support a buoyant microbrewery market which seeks to exploit the desire for infinite varieties of ale
- bird spotters use photographic kit, phone applications and spotting guides.

Regular interaction with commerce, travel and other like-minded individuals demonstrate how these activities are part of the social world. All of these niche

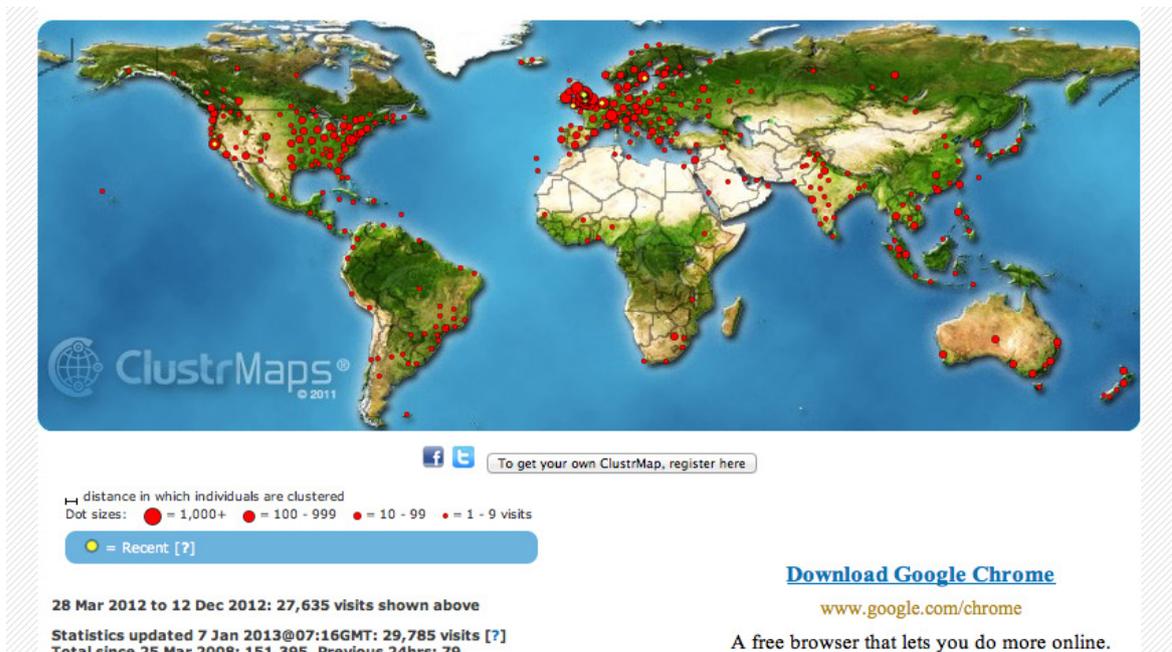


Figure 21: Beer blog global visits

interests exist within a range of distinct social groups also known as track bashers (train track tickers), gricers (train spotters), scoopers (beer tickers), twitchers and birders (bird spotters). Why do they attract such derision from mainstream society?

There is a well-recognised "virtual social identity" (Erving Goffman, 1963, p.1) that has been constructed by the media and that has over the years seen people with such interests as easy targets for ridicule and this was raised with the respondents. In *The Guardian*, Francis Wheen struck out at this injustice:

Dr Uta Frith of the Medical Research Council's Cognitive Development Unit claimed that train-spotting might well be a symptom of Asperger's Syndrome, a form of autism characterised by 'social ineptness', a 'pedantic approach' and 'a lack of a sense of irony or humour'. The clinical psychologist Dr David Weeks has argued that most train-spotters are either 'obsessional' or 'schizoid'. Meanwhile, comedians who wouldn't dream of telling jokes about Pakistanis or mothers-in-law will happily denounce spotters as dweebs and nerds. (Wheen, 1994)

Unlike the reverential treatment of antique collectors in programmes such as *The Antiques Road Show* or even the less elitist *Cash in the Attic*, spotters and tickers have long been an accepted target for poking fun on television. For example, a 1980 *Guardian* newspaper television review of Michael Palin's *Confessions of a Train Spotter* uses the key quote from a participant in the programme:

It's a living machine, I think you have love affairs with steam engines. There was a short period when I got interested in girls ... (Sutcliffe, 1980).

Not only does the article suggest that train spotters are not likely to be sexually active, even the title 'Confessions' suggest that there is something of a guilty secret in being a train spotter; *Confessions of a Window Cleaner* was part of a series of lewd films from 1974, suggesting negative voyeuristic tendencies. Ian Carter (2008) in defending the train spotter describes the contrast in perceptions with other social types:

Our fashionable metrosexuals may flaunt Baudelaire in Islington, but few flâneurs seek spectacle on windy railway platforms. (Carter, 2008, p.96)

He continues to quote a comic depiction of train spotters as 16 distinct species,

categorized as birds of the Gricerus genus. "The Train spotter", he says, "have become everybody's favourite wally" (Carter, 2008, p.96). In drawing a contrast from the present to the 1950s the term "rabid" is applied to schoolboy railway enthusiasts (Carter, 2008, p.272). That time was undoubtedly the heyday for the activity with young boys, enabled by cheap travel and armed with their Ian Allen books, crossing the country in search of particular engines. So popular was the hobby, police had to ban children from railway platforms for safety reasons (The Guardian, 1960).

Harvey (2009) puts a more positive emphasis on the experience of trainspotting for him and his friends at the time, suggesting that they had to be "suited to the outdoor, adventurous ... with boundless energy not afraid to travel" (Harvey, 2009, p.1). It was a liberating experience with a call on self-reliance and risk-taking. His book entitled *Forget the Anorak* is an attempt to relocate trainspotting in the public psyche. A 1996 report in *The Observer* newspaper describes how 'gricers' (a type of train spotter) in their late 20s were acting as social antagonists, breaking into railway yards and photographing engines and stock, whilst bearing their buttocks at the same time. Regarding this as both an art form and homage to the British Railway Industry one participant is quoted as saying "Everyone needs a reason for living" (Gill, 1996).

Martin (1999, p.35) alludes to mocking programmes *Anorak of the Week* on TV Channel 4 and the 1994 BBC Radio 4 play *Anorak of Fire* about train spotters.

The beer tickers have a more ironic public face, with bloggers such as Reluctant Scooper who describes himself as:

Married with one barbecue

I'm a reluctant scooper. This blog will plaster its fat size nines across the fine line that weaves between ignorant alcohol consumption and borderline autistic ticking. (www.reluctantscooper.co.uk, 2013)

This reflects the greater sense of community that exists within the real ale fraternity. The film *Beertickers beyond the ale* (Phil Parkin, 2009) follows Brian Moore, the Champion beer tiker of Britain, who has 38,500 real ale 'ticks' and highlights how many people migrated from train spotting to beer ticking. Pete

Brown (2010) describes beer hobbyists as “increasingly seen as eccentric” (Brown, 2010, p.296) and discusses the lack of attention given to image for these real ale drinkers who are perceived as socially inadequate “beery equivalent of the trainspotter” (Brown, 2010, p.297). Even worse than that he describes the tinker who is “looked down on even by other beer geeks”, the bottlers who take beer home in plastic bottles to taste later as “geek squared” (Brown, 2010, p.298).

The article in the trade journal *The Publican* (2008) on ‘Mick the Tick’, a person well known in ticking circles, was humorous and, although it presented Mick as a stereotype, it maintained an affectionate tone. Alienation of the real ale drinking fraternity would have a negative impact on trade and undermine the trust that exists between the landlords and the tickers.

These depictions highlight the contrasts in perceptions about train spotting: merely a sad collector of numbers, or exciting and exhilarating independent adventurers. Goffman (1963) discusses how extensive this discrediting effect can be and the resulting impact on normal social relations. He points out how the discrepancy between the virtual and the actual social identity can be influenced by perceptions of physical attributes, belief systems or racial and religious identities. There are discrepancies that may affect the estimation of an individual upward or downwards. These days some activities may receive a more sympathetic response by a benevolent media. Arguably, bird spotters have been rehabilitated by television nature programmes such as *Springwatch*, *Autumnwatch* and *Winterwatch* on BBC TV and, for real ale drinkers, by the growth in the micro-brewing industry, the increased availability of imported ales from across Europe, interest in British food and drink and endorsements by television celebrities such as James May and Oz Clarke.

It was important to hear from the respondents themselves whether they felt the effects of stigma, if not shame, attributed to their marginal interests, and whether they would make any distinctions in their appraisals of the activities of others.

With regard to social labels a number of them were defensive and felt the need to express self-deprecation: Fidel said “People will think I’m daft as a tree”, John

admitted "My friend's wife thinks her husband and I have Asperger's".

When asked why they have their collections Geraldine, Eric and Felix both referred to the 'collecting gene' as if it were not a usual state of being.

Jack was rather more direct and when asked if he had any other collections than his beer ticks retorted "Nothing.[I'm] not a sad bugger". He ranked his activity above that of the less worthy train spotter and when asked "why do you have this collection" (of 13,000 beers ticked) he replied, "Because they are there – beats standing on the end of a platform". This tongue-in-cheek response suggests that apparently trainspotting was the only other option in life imaginable.

The 'anorak' label was one that was alluded to by a number of respondents. Thom, rail enthusiast and multiple collector, discussed the motives for saving the postcards he had sent home which he considered as quite a different kind of activity. He had a very specific view on the anorak label which he wore with pride:

Well I'm chucking stuff out but I'm keeping the post cards ... I don't know if I'll keep them for ever but, I'm keeping them at the moment just ... it's not anoraky that, it's just nostalgia, just something in the family and I want to keep hold of it.

What do you mean by anoraky?

Well that's all the number collecting and having lists you know, what buses have I ridden on, which trains have I ridden on, which railway lines have I ridden on, which beers I have drunk.

Is there anything wrong with that?

Nothing wrong with it, I'm not saying anorak some folk talk about anorak in a derogatory sense, but I just see it as a, just as a badge of honour almost.

Putting the problem of perceptions back with the non-collector, Felix, beer tinker, was somewhat more philosophical:

My wife runs a pub in Xtown, but they don't understand. Non-collectors think you are introverted.

Geraldine described the sense of freedom resulting from living with another collector:

... it's only since I met Kerrie that I felt that I could be open about collecting things, because Kerrie is another collector and is blatant about it (laughs).

Having more of an interest in material collecting, Kerrie said of Geraldine who ticks:
It's something that Geraldine does and gets enjoyment from it and it doesn't hurt anyone or bother people, some people get a bit annoyed with tickers but I can't see why, but it is part of that Autism spectrum thing that I think, I know I'm certainly there on it and I think friends who know us pretty much think 'yeah, those two...' (laughs) ... I think most people have some kind of obsession; it might just not be a collection obsession. I think it's about structure.

Thom describes the change in his motivation over time and admits that in the past he had been more driven:

But I'm not desperate to do, and that's a word 'desperate' and that's quite an anoraky term that is – desperate to do things, desperate for the next new beer, desperate to do the next new bit of track, the new country or what have you. I'm not, I'm not desperate, I'm quite relaxed about it now ...

A rather more apologetic response came from Frank, who used phrases such as "sounds dreadful" and "this sounds ridiculous" when discussing his habits. He did not particularly move in collecting circles and is a self confessed "sufferer from nostalgia". Eric, the beer ticker, also follows five bus companies in London and humorously, in talking about his sister, said she probably did not realize that his 11 visits to London a year with three friends would be for bus spotting, as if it were such an unlikely and strange possibility.

These responses show a high degree of awareness of the general perceptions of their activities, and demonstrate the defence mechanisms which are in place to protect their self-regard. They range from laughing at their activities to rationalising them through either scientific grounds or self-determination. The respondents do not care greatly about these general perceptions, as the pressures of society do not bear down on them or prevent them from going about their daily habits. Some even had a high level of satisfaction from knowing they were 'different'.

As for how the social groups interacted, and whether there were any issues of status or rivalries between them, Tony the 'reluctant' collector does not like to be associated with the generic group of beer tickers and likes to be distinct:

Well I wouldn't say I can't understand it, I mean quite a lot of my

friends are (laughs) very keen collectors almost for the sake of it, so to say that I don't understand it, I mean just because I don't want to do it myself doesn't mean I don't understand it.

Why people shouldn't collect 'for the sake of it' is an interesting point of view and demonstrates Tony's resistance to surrender. Despite his own very specific criteria of what makes something worthy, he went on to say:

Okay so let's take, ... what we might think of as the most extreme example which is wanting to travel on as many buses as possible and looking at the number on the bus and knowing that you are on a bus that you've never been on before, even though it looks identical to several other buses and I realize there are you know a few different models of buses around, but there are quite a lot of each of those models, so travelling on a bus and only knowing it's one that you've never travelled on before because the number on the front is, you know near where the driver sits, is slightly, is slightly different. Now it's difficult, it would be difficult for me to empathise (laughs) with somebody who sees that as a worthwhile exercise, it does it almost seems like inventing something to collect because one is (laughs) addicted to collecting.

He uses the pejorative terms "avowed tucker", "a pure tucker", "typical ... tucker", "genuine tucker", "obsessed" but then also draws a comparison with himself saying:

Occasionally I think about looking at it in a really anoraky way and sort of thinking 'how many beers did I have from that brewery that year' and, I never get round to it, which is probably a good thing (laughs).

Despite this embarrassment, reservation and reluctance to be drawn into the stereotypical group he does admit there are genuine connections "... but I think we are all united in the fact that we like to find new and varied beers."

Jason, the bird spotter, complained that his activity got "lumped in" with the others, whereas he saw what he did as having more intrinsic value. Of one of his friends he said:

... this guy, ... 'lists grounds' you know and says he's seen Leeds United on about 100 and god knows how many different grounds and you think 'Oh Jesus'.

Yeah, I think that listing, the disdain I have is simply because people who are outside all this sort of thing tend to link these sort of hobbies

together, there is absolutely nothing, you can't link having an interest in your natural environment to how many trains have been built or buses, to me it's just listing for listing's sake. I mean you're listing numbers of identical vehicles.

However, again he acknowledges the camaraderie between people who pursue these different interests who often socialise in the same pubs:

Having said that I've got some good mates that do that sort of thing, you mustn't tell them what I've been saying!

Paul, the multiple collector, but not a ticker, disliked the prospect of being associated as someone who makes lists. It's all in his head, he said, he has no need to write things down, and of train spotting his response was "Oh Christ, no!".

On the other extreme there were respondents who were wholeheartedly encouraging of the differences between the social groups and had very positive things to say. When asked about being a beer ticker and being "lumped together" Geraldine's reply was:

(with) ... A load of train spotters. Yeah well, I've got no problem with that to be honest because a lot of beer tickers are train spotters, or bus spotters or bird (laughs) bird watchers ... there's a very large number who, you know, most of the people I knew who were tickers also have got another hobby, like X, does his trig point collecting.

In terms of the integrity of the collection of others she was very accepting:

Oh I'm intrigued by everyone, ... there's some amazing things that other people collect and things that you wouldn't ever think, that some people collect pigs, so it could be pottery pigs, it could be badges of pigs, it could be pictures of pigs, ... a theme and they collect around that theme ... that's quite a fluid thing and they decide what they want to collect or not, people who collect teapots or yeah, all sorts of things ... even if ... I'm not collecting ... still I'm intrigued by their collection and appreciate that that's their thing, it's not my thing and that's their thing and 'good on them'. I don't, I wouldn't poo poo anyone else's collection. I might think 'ooo that's a bit odd' but then they may think that it's odd that I collected Beanie Babies so... .

Ben discussed the benefits of 'ticking' to all in broad terms:

I know people that do things which to me would have no impact on me

at all like Dennis goes round photographing buses, but I actually admire him for doing that because I think that if you can get yourself a passion, something like that, totally harmless that absorbs you, gives you pleasure, helps you to switch off from things in life which are not as easy, then you've really got something. If it happens to be photographing buses, or like Fidel does with ships, brilliant! If it's ticking beers, if it's whatever, I think that people who haven't got something like that are missing something. So I don't know, when you see the geeks I admire them sometimes, they get a lot of pleasure out of simple things.

Curiously, although a systematic tinker, he did not regard himself as a geek. There were some respondents who had what Goffman (1963) would describe as an honorary membership of these social groups, in actual fact 'wise' normal types, for instance landlords or fellow drinkers, who facilitate the activity. Contrary to the lonely stereotype, this socialising is one of the motivations identified by many, as we can see from Geraldine:

I think the thing with some collections (is that they) are quite a solitary thing to do whereas the beer ticking is a very much more sociable thing to do or it is with me now, much more social, erm I think I prefer that.

and Tony:

I'm very much a pub person; in fact I should go to more different pubs than I probably do. I mean it's in a sense because there is a bit of a conflict between getting the most out of socialising with my friends here in X and going to somewhere else where I may or may not see people I know and I may just be sitting there nursing my drink on my own, but yes, yes, it is nice when a group of us go off and have a day together because you get the best of both worlds.

Another respondent Alice, a collector of things, describes herself as not a "true" collector, but would support her husband Ben in his hunt for new beers and help him get "the Buzz", that kick from gaining a tick.

These attitudes demonstrate a range of perceptions. Each activity has its own specific field of interest, artefacts, structures, aesthetics and histories. However, not all respondents were sympathetic to the passions of others. Some claim to have higher status, some were facilitators, some were particularly positive and enthusiastic about the peculiarities and the nuances of the interests of others. The latter were multiple collectors themselves and had a more liberal outlook.

4.3.3 Impact on personal relationships

The assertion that collectors of intangibles are compromised when it comes to sexual relationships is not borne out by respondents in long-term relationships. 15 out of the 19 who were asked, have all had long-term relationships, although a number of the respondents did have things to say about the effect of their collecting on them.

Regarding his youth, Jason makes the distinction between himself and others by saying "I went through teenage years as a normal teenager" that is not pursuing his bird spotting interests:

... and I wasn't one of these that spent his teenage years chasing round, looking, because (laughs) yeah, that would have been sad, and I do see people of that sort of age and 'well you're missing out on the best years of your life'.

With regard to the impact on relationships Thom relayed his views on marriage:

Agh, well, I've never ... I've not have a family life as such, I was very family orientated as regards my parents ... but ... no, never married, never had sons and daughters so, well, anyway that's that ... it wasn't a sacrifice as such, it could have happened. I was engaged twice and er, gave 'em both up.

Both Geraldine and Kerrie said that their collecting habits had increased at unhappy times in their lives, and for one this coincided with separation and divorce. Annie and Ben also both had collecting interests and this had enriched their lives together.

Evidence suggests that the stereotypical view of a sad and lonely individual tinker is an accurate one, they are very sociable and well connected although there is an obvious impact on personal relationships when someone is pursuing an all-consuming goal. Whilst some partners are supportive and encouraging, colluding with the collection, there are circumstances where choices have been made that compromised relationships. Dennis had been divorced twice, and suggested that his ticking had been a contributory factor; Jason disclosed sacrificed opportunities of marriage, children and career to pursue his interests, although he is in a long-term relationship now.

In the film *The Big Year* (2011) a character arrives at a hospital to meet his wife for artificial insemination and immediately turns around and leaves, as the opportunity

to see a rare bird to add to his list takes priority. Whilst this is a fictional account, Thom did admit to prioritising “adding to his list” of engines over a sexual encounter with a girlfriend.

This does not seem to be too far from the archetypal ‘golf widow’ situation though it would appear that the more structured activities are more easily managed with the potential to involve a willing partner. By contrast, the bird spotter who has to respond to opportunistic natural conditions and circumstances such as mass bird migration or freak weather conditions could find domestic life more problematic. Train spotters and beer tickers have larger, more predictable structures of published timetables, opening times and beer festivals as parameters to work with, and are likely to have regular ticking success.

4.3.4 Completion and the death of the collection

There were a number of differing attitudes to the prospect of collection completion. For Eric, the prospect was imminent. He had almost finished a number of self-defined categories and when asked about completion he said he was “dedicated to the cause”, and that when he actively stops growing it he will enjoy it “because I have what others haven’t.” When asked what he would do if he ever lost his collection, he shrugged his shoulders and said, “nothing, I would start again”.

To illustrate what was a common theme amongst respondents when asked about completing the collection Felix said:

If I did I would collect something else, the unattainable end point keeps you interested, although you set yourself smaller targets, kind of semi-closure. Would lose sense of purpose without collecting...You have to collect something.

In stark contrast to these active tickers, Pete had become stuck with his collection and was waiting for renewed impetus to get him moving again on his football ground collection:

Some incentive is needed for me to start again as I have got stuck at around the 65 mark. Mk Dons is being kept on a back burner, for example, until they play AFC Wimbledon.

Most of the respondents had little sense their collection would ever be completed.

The very nature of what they collected meant it was infinite and unobtainable with Felix's "semi-closure" coming with smaller sub-lists within, to maintain a sense of purpose. Jason's previous comments on his extensive range of bird lists is another example. Even though Geraldine talked about her bus spotting collection being 'completist', she is not motivated to complete her ticks and is happy with an ongoing collection.

A number of the respondents had previously lost their collections and had simply started again or started another collection. Ben said that he would abandon beer ticking if it happened to him, however the prospect of losing the collection for some was horrendous, saying they would be "distraught" (Fidel), "devastated"(Thom), and "suicidal" (Geraldine).

4.4 Beer tickers, varying modus operandi

A more detailed look at beer ticking will give some insights into the various modes of collecting for this group and how they fulfil their motivations. Opportunities to pursue these interests have to be planned into working lifestyles. Geraldine used to travel alone to pubs a couple of days a week when her children were at school, though for her it is now it is part of a more integrated social life. As has previously been described, the town observed in this study has numerous real ale pubs around the centre and observations of the beer ticking social groups there gives evidence of variations on drinking patterns:

Retired afternoon drinkers (or those with a day away from work): will take bus journeys to outlying locations, returning for early evening drinking in town. Information networks flag up the availability of new ales (through blogs, texts, conversations) and people will travel to find them. Stocks tend to be single barrels of ale, so the beer can sometimes have been 'drunk off' before arrival, or be at the end of the barrel and not in such good condition. This heightens the sense of anticipation and excitement. Pubs will be quiet at this time and like-minded individuals from other locations are often found as company.

Early doors after-work drinkers: many of the beer tickers observed in the local town were habitual 'early doors' drinkers, calling in after work, which may include

various locations within walking distance, selected depending on the beers available on the night. This routine drinking gathers up ticks without too much effort, with over 10 real ale locations nearby to choose from. They will usually not stay for late drinking sessions in the week.

Trips in groups: weekend (or pre-arranged days off) drinking sessions travelling by rail together to locations well known for ale drinking such as Leeds, York, Sheffield, Manchester departing around 11am, visiting real ale pubs and not always staying together as a group. They are seeking new ticks away from home ground so will find some ales not available locally. This also gives an opportunity to discover new pubs or bars that may have opened since the last visit. Not all in the group will be tickers, this is a high sociable occasion and they will be likely to happen across other tickers.

The First Sunday: a group that visits more local, yet not regularly visited, pubs once a month, maybe four or five in a locality on one trip. This is a sociable, relaxed occasion, yet with a purpose, this is a mixed group of tickers, general drinkers and facilitators.

Beer Festival drinkers: this is planned drinking over one or more days to work through the list of a beer festival which may offer 200s of different ales. Venues range from small village hall events to large national festivals run by CAMRA. Some may plan days off work to coincide if they are travelling far. This can involve overnight stays and sometimes be incorporated into longer holidays. The sole purpose is to try the new beers on offer, with a guaranteed high number of ticks.

Brewery tours / trips: these are groups that travel together to pre-arranged brewery visits to view brewing set-ups in either local situation or further afield. They will sample the beers, sometimes with overnight stops. There is the opportunity to speak to brewers and taste the beers in their place of origin. Some larger breweries have standard tours available to CAMRA members. Some very small breweries do not have sufficient output to distribute their beers beyond their own pubs, so they could be beers that can never be tasted anywhere else. This develops knowledge of the industry, creates contacts, gives a rarity value to the

tick and also appeals to the connoisseurs who may feel that beers do not travel well and are best drunk as kept by the brewer himself. One unique smaller brewery observed was making the use of an outside toilet as the brewhouse, with parts of the equipment adapted from a washing machine. Such visits could have kudos within the social group.

Visiting brewers: these are organised talks in local pubs bringing head brewers from around the country to discuss their methods and philosophies, products and give samples. There is usually a fee to cover expenses and food for the evening. This expands knowledge of brewing techniques, new hop varieties, and satisfies the connoisseurship interests of some tickers.

Overseas trips / beer tourism: some tickers will take visits to popular locations to visit microbreweries or brewpubs, popular locations within the observed group were Belgium, Germany, Czech Republic and Denmark. Some of the tickers would combine these visits with other activities such as train spotting / track bashing. There was an opportunity to either taste familiar beers in the location of their origin or to find new breweries that they had not tried before. There was some cultural capital in this activity.

Participation after death: When Charlie died a few years ago, fellow tickers would move a framed photograph of him from pub to pub in fond memory of his ticking routine and in recognition of his importance to the local CAMRA movement. This demonstrates the sense of camaraderie amongst the beer tickers and the sociable dimension of the activity.

Chapter 5

Interview analysis and findings

Introduction

The motivations of collectors of artefacts have changed over time: religious relics at a time of superstition, exotic artefacts from other lands at times of great exploration, scientific categorisations of the natural world during the enlightenment, manufactured goods of exquisite quality with the opening of trade to the East, the printed word with the use of moveable type, trophies of war and combat as a result of Colonialism, representations of the Other through art and photography with the development of anthropology, kitsch as a result of cheap mass production, 'collectables' with the development of leisure industries and marketing of consumer goods, ephemera with a concern for the everyday and heritage and personally generated digital collections of images through computer technologies.

We have understood that compulsion, social status, economic gain, the aesthetic desire, sentiment, fear of loss, having and not being and the excitement of the hunt are some of the factors at play. In considering the collectors of the intangible, we must consider whether the same motives apply and address the premises on which this thesis was undertaken.

5.1 Influences of external forces and autonomy

Freud (cited by Martin, 1999) and Baudrillard (1968) propose links of a sexual nature to collecting in the young and over 40s, Pearce (1998) challenges the assertions that collectors are fuelled by sexual desire, the anal erotic and fetishisation. She believes that their premises were not based on the analysis of collecting in practice, did not consider the female motivations for collecting and that conclusions were based on early, now out-moded theories of sexual psychology.

This study did not question the respondents on these specific perspectives directly, however, it was found that the age was a significant in the starting of the collecting habit and at the age that people start to awaken to the world. Thoughts of fear, death and loneliness emerge, which coincide with child development and the encouragement for children to have hobbies to make meaningful use of time.

Collecting promotes the ability to concentrate and care for things without breaking them. As a Cub Scout leader running sessions for the 'collectors' badge I have seen young girls and boys proudly displaying their treasured possessions and discussing their unique qualities. The overriding sense was pride. These were deeply personal items within their care. Kerrie clearly expressed disgust at an early age as cousins would visit and wreck her prized toy car collection. She felt this ultimately led to a less precious approach to the ownership of artefacts, curious it would seem, in a collector. These factors in childhood have a lasting impact on collecting habits. Formack (1994) agrees with this and discusses more recent psychoanalytic thought that shifts the focus from sexuality and describes collecting as:

A need of the individual to explore, be in contact with others, and search for personal stability. Formack (1994 p.329)

As for family influences, there was the question of whether parents contribute to collecting practice that would explain initial motivations? Recollections from the respondents were that very few parents themselves collected (thereby discounting the Gene theory?) or were particularly involved in them starting their own collections, and none described like minded siblings. Those who did cite some family influence included: Annie whose eggs were bought for a present as a child and which turned into a long-term collection, Thom, whose father would take him down to the engine sheds at the weekend so he could train spot and Jason, the bird spotter, who was encouraged by his parents to draw the birds he observed. These, however, were more facilitators than inspirational collectors to follow. For many of the tickers it was like-minded friends who really had an impact: Frank, the train spotter, said many of his class mates did the same so he joined in, Tony, the music collector, who was in a race to the second hand stall with his school friends, Eric, the beer ticker, whose friend wanted to 'do' beers in all the pubs in Preston, John, the pub ticker, who started with his friend who followed Manchester City to away matches. Family habits were a less significant influence. The Manchester City fan is a typical example of someone who developed his collection through opportunism: he had no particular interest but was captured by a challenge, a trigger, once a train spotter he is now a beer ticker, making the most of what his social life offered.

Eric said, "it doesn't matter what it is as long as you can get out there and do it". This lack of external pressure, the freedom to set their own parameters, along with

the sociable aspects of the collecting of intangibles, are important factors. There is no need to attend organised collectors clubs or to share their artefacts. CAMRA is an organisation that actively promotes real ale and beer festivals to facilitate the ticking habit but there is no requirement to join and not all beer tickers are members. The social dimension is inherent in the activity, it thrusts the collectors into the world and, shy and retiring as you may be, the only place for you to tick your beers is in a pub or festival, a public place.

The choice about which niche interest to follow is up to the individual and is not bound with economics. Few of the respondents had issues with funding their collecting of intangibles, and those who did have concerns were still able to be active tickers, it was a matter of making choices. Jason no longer took long trips to the south coast bird spotting due to the increased cost of fuel. Thom decided that over-production of his favourite pottery had become a financial drain and he decided to concentrate on his ticking collections which were more rewarding. The range of respondents covered a wide range of socio-economic groups and these factors did not limit interests. Pearce emphasises this is the same for the collectors of artefacts:

...it seems that, by and large, socio-economic group is not a factor that greatly affects collecting practice. (Pearce, 1998, p.29)

For many of the collectors the development of their interests were more opportunistic, such as Fidel with his Welsh landlady and the schoolboys following a peer group interest.

5.2 Immersion in a world of their own

The reference to Debord's (1977) suggestion that collecting was a 'dream-like' activity does not particularly ring true with the tickers and the spotters. The recounting of two particular narratives of the tangible collectors with their objects, however, supports the concept. Kerrie, sitting in a cupboard as a young teenager, sorting magazines and records into order for hours on end, in a world of her own and protected from a hostile exterior. Paul, the bottle collector, described in detail the cleaning routine for his bottles, sitting on the doorstep, with a hundred at a time, drinking a pot of tea, a therapeutic exercise, appreciating the colour and textures and unique qualities of each one, gently cleaning them with different sized bottle brushes.

Campbell (1987) argues that the anticipation and day-dreaming prior to consumption is central to it. Rather than the actual ownership of material goods, the imagined dreams are played out in the mind. These are often tactile experiences and the material connection and reflection with objects is a significant part of the motivation for collectors of things. His notion of romanticised yearning does, however, resonate with the tickers who not only have the pleasure of gaining a 'tick' for the collection, but also the anticipation of a trip. Travel is an important aspect, requires preplanning, knowledge of timetables and routes. The choices are consciously made to follow collections that take them across the country, for beer festivals, migrating bird sites or remote railways. Travel was a key aspect for all the intangible tickers.

The subsequent management of the collection of data of hundreds and thousands of 'ticks', 'scoops' or 'spots' was less appealing and could cause anxiety. Tony had to remember in his head the different drinks consumed because he didn't want to be seen as a ticker in public. Fidel, impatiently waiting for retirement to have time to filter, organise and sort the random bags of photographs that languished in the corner of his office. Ben, the multi-ticker, who recorded many aspects of life to allay fears of forgetting details. Eric, the beer ticker, who systematically set days for drinking and acquisition, and a work-like day for the related paperwork and data transfer. Whilst the ticker is clearly absorbed in his activity, the maximum pleasure of the experience is in the anticipation and the moment of gaining the tick rather than engaging with the subsequent memory. The reflections on experiences through websites, blogs and journals are positive outcomes, but few suggested that they would spend much time looking over their collections, the information was there for reference. The next trip was always more important than the last.

5.3 Finding significance in life

Baudrillard (1968) asserted that man has the ability to attribute magical status to whatever he chooses and this is not a difficult concept when considering objects such as the egg collection. Annie stroked and cradled the eggs whilst showing the collection, was reverential in tone when speaking about them, and displayed a real curiosity about the manufacture and substrates, describing the tactile qualities that she liked, and the widespread locations from which they were brought. There was a romantic quality about these small 'pretty' items that she held precious. Geraldine

took her sci-fi cards from their plastic wallets and stroked the fabric samples that were attached and which represented costumes from the related television series. She admired the shiny and reflective special cards. However, her own annotated collection of ticks were handled matter-of-factly, and with little affection.

As is clear from the disparaging remarks made about bus and train spotters a collection of intangibles is a more difficult concept for the general public to appreciate. Even amongst other tickers there was a general lack of understanding of why anyone would find production line transport units of any interest. These collectors were not interested in the nostalgic 'steam era' to which most people could relate, those old engines were too familiar and there was insufficient scope for them to be seriously collectable. Dennis knows the number plate of every vintage bus in the north of England, and was happy to discuss them endlessly at the bar, but his real interest was in the transport of today.

There is certainly a good deal of emotion in the narratives; the collections form diaries of sorts and are markers of the collectors movements through time and space, encountering different 'things' making up unique experiences. They serve as memorials to 'being' not 'having' and leave impressions of feelings of delight, satisfaction and 'the buzz'.

The objects which had been observed and 'collected' through these sightings do have a patina, there is an aesthetic appreciation, and the objects are at a certain point in their history. The ship may be half-way through its lifespan, and the next time it may be seen in an entirely different colour, under a different name and in a location thousands of miles away. The ticker is witness to the object at a particular moment in time. They may even have travelled on them, (such as the track basher) engaged with them and shared in a part of the history of that object.

Baudrillard (1968) asserts that functional objects are "devoid of being" (Baudrillard, 1968, p.85) and whilst we can consider the eggs collected as having "minimal function and maximal meaning" (Baudrillard, 1968, p.86) it is not true that the train or bus system exists without mythical status for their collectors. They experience the objects within the present and anticipate the future whilst also appreciating the

past, these feelings co-exist. For the transport tickers, the functionality of the bus or tram and its presence in the everyday is what keeps their interest, they are a part of a network of systems of which new stock is constantly being introduced and there is no completion in a world that is constantly changing. Their ability to move with the times and embrace new systems and eagerly anticipate the future is exactly the “triumphant unconscious discourse” that Baudrillard describes (1968, p.93).

The taste and aesthetic of the individual, and what drives their selection of objects or interests is highly particular, this is a common feature between the collectors of all types and is no different in the collectors of intangibles. Thom’s collection of ticks of the balsamic vinegars that he has consumed was one of the most unusual, but he had previously been a chef and took an interest in food and treated the vinegars in the same way as someone would regard wines. This is no random hoarding of data, but an ordered and systematic activity: trains only of this type and on that system are of interest to the collector, beers from a particular brewery, football grounds in the English league, commercial ships not cruise liners.

In determining so precisely the category of interest there is no direct competition with anyone else. You could engage in a ‘race’ to success but the vast majority of the respondents were non-competitive in their practice. Even the beer ticker who knows in broad terms that Jim has 20,000 ticks and Fred has 35,000 does not allow this to undermine his self-belief and drive. As a late starter, Tony knows that he can’t compete with these totals, there simply isn’t enough time, even at 10 new beers a week. For the birder with a more limited number of targets there is more potential for competition, though how far people would go to prevent others from succeeding before them (The Big Year, 2012) is unclear, however Jason did talk of hoaxers and of people fighting for the best views at sightings.

This ability to control one’s expectations and ambitions is empowering for individuals who may have limited time or finance, so these activities are, in the main, free of pressures of social status. You can be a beer ticker and drink 1/3rd pints just one day a week, stand on a station platform for free to train spot or, as a bird spotter, join others in local wildlife habitats close to home on your bike. There are no annual fees, there is no need to join a club and display your collection to others. This is a

non-hierarchical activity. Baudrillard's (1968) assertion that success comes only in the public recognition and display of a collection is unfounded with these collectors who gain self-fulfilment without the need of the approval of others.

Despite their initial passions, peoples' relationships with their collections of artefacts can change over time. Eric swapped his collection of stamps for one of cigarette cards. Frank's childhood collection of matchbox labels, once loved for its exotic overseas locations is now appreciated for artistic qualities and the labels are treasured as graphical timepieces. For the tickers and spotters their flexibility in approach was a liberating factor as there is nothing to give away, there is no exchange value in it, all they own is their knowledge and experience. They are totally free to stop or alter their collection at any time with no material consequences and many had done so.

5.4 Storage and caring

Pearce (1998) discusses the differences between male and female collecting including the storage of items:

Men are rather more inclined to see their material in terms of the conceptual sense which they can develop from it; women are more concerned with the affective aesthetic which it represents, and its "homemaking" qualities of pleasing appearance and comforting effect. (Pearce, 1998, p.160)

This study did not focus on gender issues but these comments are of interest as most of the respondents who were tickers were males. Pearce's assertion may indeed be one reason why men appear more likely to be tickers, satisfied with this abstract notion of an intangible collection. This type of collection does not contribute anything to the shared living experience of a household and in this sense it would seem to be a fairly selfish activity. Pearce suggests that men make opportunities to collect, whilst women are more concerned with marking moments of time. Pearce also suggests a fundamental differences in motive saying:

It would be an exaggeration to say that men collect in order to organise and women in order to remember; but this brief statement has a seed of truth. (Pearce, 1998, p.160)

It is true for the ticking respondents that organising and sorting was an appealing, if sometimes onerous, task. There were also significant responses citing the need

to remember: having an aide-memoire for facts, being able to recall events and times, taking them back to specific places to relive feelings. Men clearly displayed emotional attachments to their memories. In discussion, however it was the moment of the capture, 'the buzz' they ultimately enjoyed the most. For the tickers, the main impact at home was the storage issue for their notebooks, for which they seemed to have contradictory feelings. They were precious about them during collecting, yet when complete they were stuffed in drawers or stored in boxes in the spare room. Once utilized, the notebooks were no longer cherished and were seldom looked at again.

None of the respondents said that they displayed their collections of 'ticks', two of the tickers, one male, one female, who also collected pottery both displayed these within the home, these collections having the distinction of economic worth and more traditional decorative attributes.

5.5 Collecting versus hoarding

When asked about the issue of hoarding there was a categorical denial from the respondents with regard to their own practices, they did not feel that they displayed hoarding characteristics; they would admit compulsive behaviour, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and autistic traits, but not purposeless accumulation. The collectors of ticks were in the main focused and meticulous in the management of their data. Nordsletten & Mataix-Cols (2012) in a paper discussing pathological hoarding state that:

investigations into object accumulation have increasingly focused on its ability, in some cases, to hinder normal performance.

Yet they failed to draw sufficient comparisons between hoarding and collecting to link them, recognising that whilst there are overlaps there are also distinctive differences between healthy collectionism and pathological hoarding.

5.6 Completion and serial collecting

Collecting is an open-ended activity demonstrating an interest in categorisation, yet there is little evidence from the respondents that these collections of intangibles will ever be complete. John, the pub ticker, had taken 37 years to reach his current total, and that was only around 50% of the number of pubs in the country (a

shifting number in these uncertain times). Mini-targets to encourage one forward are commonplace: an annual collection, a regional collection, a very specific niche. This ability to self determine the parameters is a protection against finishing and motivation for the continuation. This is clearly stated in Felix's comment:

The unattainable end point keeps you interested [I] would lose purpose without collecting.

However, the tickers and spotters are pragmatic, and, should they complete, then they have no doubt that they will simply start again by collecting something else. This was reflected in their response to the question about the consequences of losing their collection of data. This had happened to some, and whilst they were upset at the time, it did not stop them from continuing in their pursuit. Only one of the beer / pub tickers was ambitious to complete and to be the best, to be the top man in the country. The imminent conclusion of a big total for Jason, the bird spotter, was eagerly anticipated. Only around 200 people had recorded 500 unique sightings in Britain, and he was just 12 short of that total. Yet when asked about when the collection would end, there was no sense that it would ever happen unless he was rendered "blind, incapacitated or broke". This was a way of life.

In terms of serial collection, there were different perspectives between both types of collectors. Kerrie and Geraldine, as trading card collectors, were very driven to complete series and, whilst they may have their favourite items, their preferences were irrelevant to the overall aims, they had to complete. This is what Tony had called "almost for the sake of it", collecting without discrimination. Similarly the beer ticker in the hunt for different ales will drink a half pint regardless of the pleasure it gives them, or at least will pay for it. Glasses are occasionally found abandoned undrained. Belk (1994) observed:

Despite their incidental start, many collections are seen as becoming an addictive activity in which adding items to the collection constitutes a 'fix'. (Belk, 1994, p.319)

However, this does not necessarily result in a desire to complete. The bus spotter is not interested in all buses, the train spotter has his nuanced collection and won't change his opinion simply because other trains are more available. If they did want to complete then there would be many opportunities to construct a collection to do

so, although they would consequently have to make adjustments to their social lives.

Therefore the perceptions that tickers are out to fulfil an ambition and complete is not proven in these respondents. Thom did say that there were far more 'extreme' cases than him, and it could well be that at the far end of the collecting spectrum there are more people with this motive.

5.7 Consumption, being and not having

When asked whether the activity of 'collecting nothing' was absurd, most of the respondents agreed. They were self-deprecating in attitude and collecting nothing is what they do. No-one else can stake an interest and there is no heritage aspect inherent in the collection. It was thought generally that family or friends would see no value in the artefacts and throw them away upon the death of the respondent. Only two had other comments to make: Fidel intended to bequeath his photographs of ships to a society that may be interested and Jack, who had an executor who was also an archivist, thought that maybe he would be interested in his collection of beer ticks. Geraldine thought that her children would keep her physical collections but throw her beer ticking collections away and said: "You can't say 'have my beer collection', because only you've tasted those beers". There was no 'monument' to leave.

In contrast, when collecting things, there were different, maybe fairly obvious, perspectives. The motives started with aesthetic, visceral pleasure, and the pleasure of acquiring and consumption impacted differently upon them. Thom had bought into the 'need' to buy all the products from a certain manufacturer. His activity had become compulsive and he had been a part of the collectors' club. He has become "a little bit tired of it these days", and he sees the business as an "empire" now and is more selective in what he collects. However, the collection is there as a financial back-up in case he needs it and falls on hard times. He has an investment with the bonus that it also gave him pleasure in the hunt and the acquisition.

For Geraldine, there was a serious attempt to complete a pre-determined manufactured set of sci-fi trading cards, bulk buying boxes of cards online. These

were then placed into a branded, purpose-made file, the missing cards would be evident as there was an individual space for each of them. The collection represented an association with the television series, but also had new special aspects in the fabric samples that added perceived value to the cards. Similarly Paul, the football sticker collector, made a determined effort to complete his first Panini FIFA World Cup souvenir book, something he had never been able to afford to do as a child. A frantic flurry of activity over a short period of time resulted in a completed collection. This involved eBay trading, and he said he would not do it again. These products, manufactured to collect, extend brands and are part of the marketing industry that attracts consumers from popular events, films or television programmes.

One would assume that the collecting of ephemera should have none of the connotations of commerciality, although we have seen in Chapter 2 exceptions in the 'special edition' ranges that manipulate consumer desire for everyday items. There is also value in the seemingly worthless mass-produced domestic packaging, and Robert Opie's collection-turned-museum demonstrates how initial obsessions can develop into valuable commodities. Assumptions that the tickers operate outside the norms of the collecting system can also be challenged as the collectors are all consumers of magazines, guide books and phone apps. These are all commercial enterprises.

It is evident in the collections of 'ticks' that status and self regard came through the 'doing' rather than the 'having'. This is demonstrated through respondent opinions of 'just getting out and doing it', and their views of the competition. In saying they 'would never catch up' or 'will never have as many as X or Y' when they join the game it's clear that they can't match the levels of someone 10 years into their collection. Whilst the collection itself means something to them there is no transfer value and raises the issue of whether the motivations of the tickers are a conscious anti-consumerist standpoint.

How can objects that are commercially produced en masse and with no scarcity value, become 'collectables'? Pearce (1998) in *Axes of Value* (Table 2, p.34) suggests these sit in the 'spurious' domain. However, she makes distinctions

between products that are commodities which are turned into collections such as milk bottles and egg cups and the products which are produced for collecting, such as giftware and kitsch. Gelber (1999) describes these as primary and secondary collections.

Žižek (1989) gives us further insights by discussing the Marxist notion of 'reification' and the objectification of abstract concepts:

behind the things, the relation between things, we must detect the social relations, the relations between human subjects
(Žižek, 1989, p.28)

He describes the illusion that is at play, what people are conscious of *doing* as well as that they *think* or *know*. People understand the everyday relationships between people and things, and that for example money is merely a sign that allows access to goods, and they act daily on that premise. He claims:

The problem is that in their social activity itself, in what they are doing, they are acting as if money, in its material reality, is the immediate embodiment of wealth as such. They are fetishists in practice, not in theory. What they 'do not know', what they misrecognize, is the fact that in their social reality itself, in their social activity - in the act of commodity exchange - they are guided by the fetishistic illusion. (Žižek, 1989, p.28)

He develops this idea by suggesting that there are two potential ways to read this form of reality, one from the standpoint of knowledge: "they know what they are doing, and they are doing it" (Žižek, 1989, p.30) with no illusions. However if there are illusions in the reality this could be interpreted differently: "they know that, in their activity, they are following an illusion, but still, they are doing it" (Žižek, 1989, p.30).

When the tickers are 'collecting nothing' the object of interest is sometimes a passive participant in the process, for example the functional transport system or the migrating bird: a train on the Northern Line would run regardless of whether there was a person who had travelled 200 miles to see it. This is not commodity fetishism, there is no intention on the part of the object to be collected. The tickers understand this it has no material benefit by anyone else's measure, and yet they do it anyway. By contrast the endless variety of beers produced on a weekly basis

are specifically designed for consumption: an eager drinker parts with his money to swell his collection, paradoxically, regardless of the quality (Mellows, 2008, p.18). The beer ticker understands this relationship is a commercial one. In the 1980s when many of them started to develop their interests in different ales the variations were in products from regional breweries. In the 2010s the increase in microbreweries and hop varieties has expanded the range of permutations, and each recipe is separately named and branded to attract the curious drinker. To liken this activity to train or bird spotting is misguided, the beer tickers are aware that beers are made specifically for them to consume, and yet they do it anyway. Whilst there is a common acceptance between these different types of collectors, of the worthlessness of their collections, one is driven by the consumption of commodities and the other is not.

We should then liken the beer tickers to primary collectors and bird and train spotters to secondary collectors. Although they have similar methods of recording, they are not motivated by the same factors and should not be regarded as the same.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This thesis has analysed the distinction between the motives of collectors of intangibles as opposed to the collectors of things and has explored: the relationships collectors have with their collections, habits that form social lives, the variations in collecting practices and perceptions that are held about collectors. Collections of intangibles, the 'ticks' and 'spots', do not fit with usual expectations of accumulations of 'stuff'. King has argued that:

Collecting is a constant reassertion of the power to own, an exercise in controlling otherness, and finally a kind of monumental building to insure survival after death. For this reason you can often read the collector in his or her collection, if not in the collection themselves, then in the business of acquiring, maintaining and displaying them. To collect is to write a life. (King, 2008, p.38)

For the collectors of intangibles there is a lack of a lasting monument which brings into question their motives. What drives them to undertake years of dedicated pursuit in the accumulation of hundreds, in some cases thousands of 'ticks'? The perception of train spotters, birders and beer tickers as solitary and rather sad individuals is common in the media. It is even shared by some of the collectors themselves. Their collections remain shrouded in mystery, inaccessible to, and misunderstood by, onlookers who can see no tangible outcomes.

Qualitative information was gathered through observations at a variety of social events: in real ale pubs, a railway gala, beer festivals, and through semi-structured interviews with a range of both 'tickers' and collectors of things. This thesis has presented revealing insights into a complex and fulfilling activity. It details the similarities and differences between collectors of intangibles and collectors of material objects.

There are many contradictions between perceptions and reality. The collectors of intangibles, the 'tickers', are regarded as solitary and reclusive but, for many, the sociability of the hunt is important. Completion is not the overpowering motive although the assumption is that they need to complete lists. The business of

acquiring, of being and doing and not of having, is central. The pleasure of travel and a spirit of adventure was inherent in these collectors and yet they are regarded as boring. Respondents did not care that others considered their collections to be strange, obsessive behaviour and would even wear their 'anorak' label as a badge of honour. The need for 'the buzz' was a driving force, but this investment could be transferred to alternative collections without remorse.

From the evidence gathered there was no link between the collectors of intangibles and the issue of hoarding. Activity was very focussed and systematic, the ordering of information is clearly an imperative when accumulating large amounts of data, clutter was not something that was tolerated.

There was no evidence of the 'collecting gene' described by some respondents. The majority of the 'tickers' were also collectors of material objects, and they had different motivations for their separate collections. By contrast not all the collectors of things were 'tickers'.

Pearce cited by McIntosh and Schmeichel (2004) identified 17 motivations for the collectors of things. This study has identified the following motivations for the collectors of intangibles:

- the excitement in discovery and finding rarities
- pleasure in achieving a 'tick'
- the pleasure in comparisons
- aesthetic pleasure of observing the objects
- ability to contribute to knowledge
- recording of memories
- status through cultural capital
- work like structure of acquisition
- pleasure in recording life as you live it
- serial collecting habits
- desire for completion
- compulsive behaviour
- building heritage through the collection
- having a structured social life
- sharing a hobby with like-minded people
- having an affordable interest
- owning the parameters
- non-competitive activity within sociable setting

the adventure of travel
being different 'badge of honour'

Appendix 15 evidences the similarities to the collectors of things. It also shows that not all of the motivations are consistent across the types of tickers and spotters: cultural capital, completion and serial collecting were low motivators for the majority of the respondents. Consistently high themes were the adventure of travel, owning their own parameters and the pleasure of a non-competitive activity within sociable setting.

The narratives support the conclusion that these collectors exist in mixed collecting economies, often with multiple collections, though whilst engaging in 'ticking' and 'spotting' they present as a distinct group within the social world resulting in unjust stigmatisation.

The motivation for all types of collectors of intangibles is the experiential acquisition, which generates data and notional totals. These collections are attributed values by the individual. Being free of economic value and with little physical entity, they can be abandoned by the collector at any time. The collectors use this factor as a positive force, enabling them to freely shift their interests depending on their circumstances or desires.

6.1 Potential for further study

This thesis in analysing human relationships to objects raised the question of how different people respond to abstract concepts of collecting. Dant's work was particularly thought provoking as he suggests that values in material culture should not just relate to status, but to the preferences we make when physically interacting in the world of objects and things. In this context it would be intriguing to capture deeper qualitative data with respect to the participant's value systems to explore their effect.

This thesis captured an unforeseen but vitally important aspect of intangible collection - the materiality of the documentation: notebooks that had travelled many journeys, systematic uniform notations and currency-like sheets of paper. The

visceral qualities of these items, the memories they contain and the rich narratives they hold are all worthy of a dedicated study.

The changes in the relationship between the train spotter / basher and the railway over the past 50 years is an insight into the consumption of travel, tourism and the engagement people have with transport systems. There is potential for some meaningful investigation in this field.

For artists and designers the collection of ephemera and objects of daily life plays an important part of their inspirational backdrop and are used as signifiers within visual culture. Herb Lubalin (American graphic designer), Wayne Hemmingway and Paul Smith (fashion designers), Peter Blake (artist) and Alan Fletcher (British graphic designer) have all published books referring to inspiration gained from found objects and ephemera. It is important for design students, who are intuitive collectors themselves, to appreciate the value of what they collect and how as a methodological process it can be used to add creative value to design outputs produced at undergraduate and post graduate level.

As I have now examined the nature of collections it is time to create my own lasting monument and rescue the consecutive architectural stones from the obscurity of the list to form a tangible collection through publication or exhibition.



Figure 22: Memory of underage drinking in the 1970s, author's own

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Appendix 1: Historical collecting trends (after Belk, 1995)

Ancient Greece	Mediaeval Europe	1450-1550	16th and 17th centuries	18th century	19th century
<p>Fads Fashions</p> <p>Secure wood paintings Sculptures Portraits</p> <p>Luxury Extravagance Snobbery Envy Vanity Trophies</p>	<p>Religious Relics</p> <p>Bones of Saints Holy Artifacts Toenails Wood from crosses Drops of Blood</p> <p>Fraudulent artefacts markets satisfy needs of Churches</p>	<p>Unearthing of sites Art becomes Commodity</p> <p>Roman Relics Rusty medallions Art Jewels Oddities eg Unicorn horn Development of Wunderkammer</p> <p>Medicis</p>	<p>Collecting the World Inbetween religion and science</p> <p>Age of discovery Foreign lands Wunderkammer and Kunstkammer Encyclopaedic collections Surprising or striking contrasts Dinosaur bone v bat Ostrich egg v hummingbird Secular wonders of the world</p> <p>New collectors: professions, doctors, lawyers, scholars</p> <p>Dutch 'Golden Age' Tulip vases and rare tulips from Turkey State intervention to control price Books and engravings Main auction centre</p> <p>Methods of display distinction of categories</p>	<p>French Art market Fads as changeable as fashions in clothing</p> <p>Reflected in literature of the time</p> <p>Amusing and fashionable hobby - nuanced categories</p> <p>Analysis of 723 French collections :</p> <p>Ancient medals move across decades to shells minerals, plants anatomical specimens natural history specimens More socially acceptable</p> <p>Foundation of British Museum 1753</p> <p>How to do it guides in England</p> <p>Versailles stripped of 17,182 treasures in 1793</p> <p>Freaks of nature (Swift's satire Gullivers Travels 1729)</p> <p>Zoos and big game hunting Mercantile period ended</p>	<p>Seeking wisdom Industrialisation Gain control of the world</p> <p>Bricolage mania v Objects d'Art Art v Craft Artifact v curio Insignificant trifles v art with merit Indulgent pleasure v scientific interest Orderliness \ scientific precision completeness</p> <p>Sir William Hooker 1843 Kew Gardens - trees laid out by genera</p> <p>Increase of speculative buying</p> <p>Elgin Marbles from Parthenon 1806 eventually paid for by Parliament in 1816.</p> <p>Railroadiana Stamps Labels mass-produced objects Pomography</p>

Key shifts in collecting patterns after Belk (1995)

Appendix 2: Objects we desired: participant invitation

OBJECTS WE DESIRED

consuming and collecting: a shared experience in New York City January 2009

My interest lies in what objects we bring back from our cultural trips and holidays to remind us of our travels, and why. What is it that makes us want to keep these souvenirs and momentos, what does it say about us, and why are we all different?

I would like to ask those of you who had your feet photographed in New York to participate in this project documenting 'our' collective gatherings.

Please could you bring in for me one object that you brought back with you to be photographed on Monday morning next (16th February), along with page 2 of this document, completed (this should only take maybe 10 minutes of your time). The item should be something that you bought while you were there, and which has significance to you.

Please bring these to CAA/02/02 the CAD room at 9.15am, where I shall collect all the items. I would like some student volunteers to bring them in batches for me down to the photo studio where Sue Pritchard has assigned a couple of hours to photograph them. If you are free for half an hour you could help Sue do the lighting and styling if the groups are small enough.

The items will be ready to collect by 2pm.

I shall also need you to identify your own feet. I shall have a print out of the pictures ready on Monday, please make sure during the day that you add your name next to your shoes (4pm latest).

Thank you for your help, I hope that we shall discover some interesting findings!!!

**PLEASE COMPLETE PAGE 2 AND EMAIL THIS BACK TO ME
REPLACING THE FILE NAME WITH :**

YOURNAME.OBJECTS.doc

thank you for your help

Margot Swift
Wednesday 11 February 2009

Appendix 3: Objects we desired: participant questionnaire

Questionnaire: NYC visit January 2009

Name:

Age:

What is your object to photograph:

Course: **CRIM Advertising/Illustration/Graphics AMDM MUSIC**

About your object to photograph :

Why did you buy it?

Where did you buy it from?

How much did you pay (roughly) in \$?

Was it 'worth it'?

What does it say about you?

What does it say about NYC?

What will you do with it? Where will you keep it?

Do you have other objects like this?

If so how long have you collected / how many do you have /why?

About your travel habits:

Was this your first time in New York?

If not how old were you when you went before?

What kind of holidays do you normally take / activity / city / beach / traveling etc and why is this?

What kind of locations would you usually visit?

What did you enjoy doing most whilst you were in NYC?

What did you learn about the culture of NYC?

Did you think NYC is the same as the rest of the US if you have visited elsewhere? If not why?

Has this trip changed your views in any way?

OBJECTS WE DESIRED

conspicuous consumption or cultural collectables?



summary

This project is part of a wider interest in material culture and how we record and value our life experiences through collections. In particular for this study, is how we do this when we are tourists; what and why do we choose to bring home certain items as mementos and souvenirs.

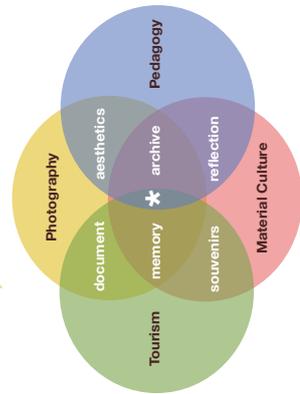
A student field trip to New York City in January 2009 was the perfect opportunity to collect first hand research on purchases and commentaries relating to objects with students from courses in Communication Design, Design and Music from the University.

this is a record of the initial research work undertaken and the visual documentation of specific objects gathered from the trip.

aims and objectives

There are two main aims of this project; firstly to progress my own area of interest in collections, by creating yet another photographic collection, but also by comparing the results with published texts that suggest that gender and age stereotypes determine behaviour in this field; secondly to involve the students in activity that broadens their awareness of tourism, the nature of collecting and the appreciation of material artifacts. In presenting this in an academic framework there is the opportunity not only for self reflection but for them to start to gain an understanding of how our relationship to 'things' matters beyond a mere accumulation of wealth and consumer goods.

field of study



- 1 Time Magazine, Jan 2009
- 2 Family photo, Athens, Aug 2008
- 3 Skull books from Bruce Kennel, Peru, Nilesen-Helroy Museum, NYC Jan 2009
- 4 Man viewing Jackson Pollock, MOMA, NYC, Jan 2008
- 5 Balcony, Lodz, Poland March 2008
- 6 Chair in street, Venice July 2004
- 7 1877 dailstone, Eboli, Senegal June 2006
- 8 Roadside shrine, Mount Olympus, Greece Aug 2009
- 9 Postbox, Corsica June 2008
- 10 Students at Chelsea International Hotel NYC Jan 2009

Margot Swift
Senior Lecturer
Communication Design

* project



Documents



Photographs



Artifacts



Artifacts with known creator

There are many ways in which we keep connections with the past. Given the option to choose from a multiplicity of sources what do we select, on a specific journey, with a limited budget, access, time and airline weight restrictions

Personal context

I have stopped yearning for Venetian glasses, Bordeaux wines and with the democratisation of photography I have my collection of souvenirs on a tiny memory card inside a Samsung GX10



Doors and balconies



Lone chairs



Architectural datelines



Shrines



Post and letter boxes

The research context

Research suggests that age and sex play an important part in the objects that we chose to share our lives with. Parents are divided into those interested in the past, such as old diaries, the present, such as plants and the future, kits to make up and create. The older generation are more likely to be contemplative and be reminded of former actions and events, whereas teenagers are almost exclusively concerned with objects that embody their current concerns, and things they can immediately connect with in the 'here and now'. Stereotypically males are interested in active, instrumental objects such as TVs, power tools and sports equipment. Women nurture and conserve, so plants, plates, textiles and photographs are more likely to be kept.

How we 'consume' tourism also differs, how we interact with unfamiliar surroundings, as do our methods of recording such memories, it would be interesting to investigate whether there were any links between the student's expectations and the reality of the New York experience and how they react and select objects - would this reflect their 'usual' practise when on a trip. Observations from previous visits with students suggest that NYC has a high impact on first-time visitors. It is a unique city; the location for countless films, historical, culturally diverse and with 20th century consumerism as its heart. In a large group who are so visually aware how would they react, is it important for them to bring home something of real value, a cliché, something with historical connections or a memory of some activity and event.

Methodology

Students were asked to participate in a group project. A photograph of all students was taken whilst in New York, to identify them. On return students were asked to bring in one object to represent them from their trip

What did the sample group bring home from their (mainly) first visit to the shopping capital of the world, New York City and why?



which would be photographed under studio lights, and to collect it later in the day. They were asked to answer a number of questions relating to the object, their thoughts on the trip and their usual types of holiday.

Aim

To collect data to test the initial premise regarding age and sexual stereotypes. To document student perceptions of NYC and how they acted as 'tourists'. To document the students' feet in New York, which took them round the city. To make a collection of photographs of the moments, and souvenirs of the trip. To give the material objects brought home status and demonstrate their importance. To help students to appreciate that the things they do have a broader context and that self reflection facilitates a greater understanding of other consumers and the world around them.



CHRIS



JUSTINE



DAN



JULIE



SYMON



TANIA

Appendix 4: Objects we desired: conspicuous consumption or cultural collectables

Appendix 5: Objects we desired: research data

Analysis of questionnaires: Objects we desired

No: 25

type of object:	technical	toy	clothes	china	ticket	sweets	bag/wallet	total
price:	6 under \$5	5 \$5 - 9	8 \$10 - 49	1 \$50 - 99	2 \$100 + over	1	2	25
bought at:	8 museum	3 street seller	12 chain	designer	individual	tourist shop	machine	25
do with it?	1 gift	2 collection	15 wear	momento	4 build it	2 use	1	25
first visit	3 yes	3 no	9 no	2	1	7		25
other parts of US:	18 yes	7 no						25
normal holiday:	14 culture	11 sport activity	beach	camp	b/c mix			25
	4	3	12	1	5			25

type of object:	technical	toy	clothes	china	ticket	sweets	bag/wallet	%
price:	24 under \$5	20 \$5 - 9	32 \$10 - 49	4 \$50 - 99	8 \$100 + over	4	8	100
bought at:	32 museum	12 street seller	48 chain	designer	individual	tourist shop	machine	100
do with it?	4 gift	8 collection	60 wear	8 momento	16 build it	8 use	4	100
first visit	12 yes	12 no	36 no			28		100
other parts of US:	72 yes	28 no						100
normal holiday:	56 culture	44 sport activity	48 beach	camp	b/c mix			100
	16	12	48	4	20			100

OBJECTS WE DESIRED

data

68 pairs of feet were photographed - this was the sample group

- 9 remained unidentified
- 1 photograph of feet was claimed by two females
- 30 females / 29 males

37 objects collected from NYC were submitted

- 18 females / 19 males

25 questionnaires relating to them were returned

- 13 females / 12 males
- 2 members of staff participated, 1 female 1 male

From the questionnaires:

- 32% of the objects were clothes
- 24% were technical objects
- 20% were toys
- 48% of the purchases were between \$10-49
- 44% were under \$10
- 60% of the purchases were made in chain stores
- 36% of the objects were to wear
- 28% were to use
- for 72% it was their first visit to NYC
- 56% had visited other areas of the US before
- 48% usually had beach holidays
- 48% usually had beach holidays
- 20% would have a mix of beach & culture

Females:

- First time in NYC 55%
- NYC specific item 22%
- Chosen for nostalgia/memories 50%
- Category: Fashion item 50%
- Toy / collectables 28%
- Ephemera 5%
- Useful 17%

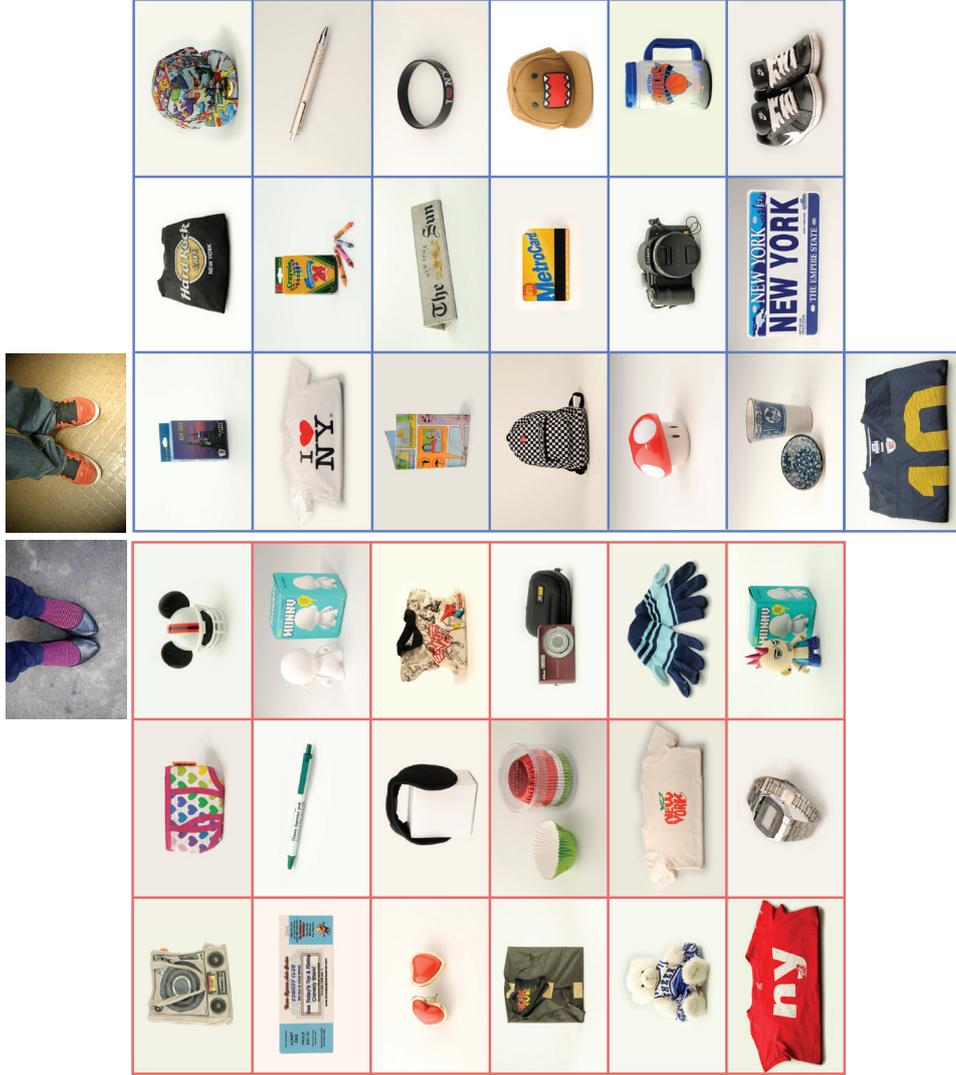
Males:

- First time in NYC 42%
- NYC specific item 47%
- Chosen for nostalgia/memories 42%
- Category: Fashion item 42%
- Toy / collectables 16%
- Ephemera 5%
- Useful 37%

Conclusions:

It's maybe oversteering the case somewhat to draw conclusions from what is a relatively small sample, however it is interesting to note that 'fashion' items featured large in both groups. For the so called fashion capital of the world this is maybe understandable. Some of the iconic items for NYC are indeed fashion related, the NY t-shirt being a great example. Ephemera figured low on the list, however as the students were asked for 1 item only it was unlikely that they would think of something so lowly as a metro ticket, in the main. Having seen the bags of receipts and tickets cluttering up the studio a study of ephemera collection could be another study for another day. For almost half of students this was their first trip to NYC and almost half of them said they chose items for nostalgic / memory inducing reasons. The collection of items, and shoes are hopefully a thought provoking presentation in themselves, categorisation and comparisons of interest in themselves as visuals. As previously mentioned this is the beginning of the documentation of interest with future project work planned on related themes.

Appendix 6: Objects we desired: poster presentation



thanks to the students of the University of Huddersfield and Ecole Regionale des Beaux Arts, Besançon for their contribution to this project, and to Sue Pritchard for assistance with the photography

Appendix 7: Winter beer festival participant questions

Questionnaire: Margot Swift, University of Huddersfield
Winter beer festival 2010

1. What do you collect
2. Do you have more than one collection
3. How many of them do you have in your collection
4. Are there things you would like to collect
5. What criteria do you use for it to be worth collecting
6. Are these your criteria or what is accepted as the 'norm'
7. Why do you think you have this collection
8. Did you parents or family also collect
9. Do your family and friends know of your collection
10. Would anyone else covert your collection
11. What is it that you value about these objects
12. When did you start
13. Why did you start
14. Do you share your collection with others
15. Is it on display
16. Do you show it to anyone else
17. How is it kept
18. Do you keep a data base / log book / record of critical information
19. Do you regard your collection as a hobby or artistic endeavour
20. Have you ever had a collection that you have disposed of
21. How do you feel about your collection
22. What would you do if you lost your collection
23. Does the collection have a value outside of your own possession
24. Does your collection give you any particular emotions
25. Would there be any circumstances when you could not continue with your collection
26. Is there a sense that you could ever complete your collection
27. Can you imagine doing this for the next 10/20 years
28. Will it be possible to enjoy your collection if you stop actively growing it

Appendix 8: Question mapping

Question mapping

Questions for collectors	What I want to know	Why do I?
The Person Who are you Age Where do you live How do you live - alone / family What do you do for work / income	The Person Name Age Locality Social structure Economic group	The Person Confidential for reference Categorisation of age Cultural background Pressures in relationships Amount of disposable income
The Object What do you collect Do you have more than one collection How many do you have of those (precise no. or general) which you collect Are there things that you would like to collect but can't	The Object Category Amount of collections Precision / accuracy Desires beyond reach	The Object Single or multiple objects Absorption in activity Awareness, importance of detail Compromise/future ambition/ acceptance
Personal definitions and scope What are the criteria you use to regard something as worthy of collecting Are these your criteria, shared or the accepted 'norm' Why are they so What do you think would be outside the remit of your collection	Personal definitions and scope Self limiting factors Individual / group Level of self determination How determined	Personal definitions and scope Sense of discipline Need to belong Ownership Judgements on others
Motives Why do you think that you have this collection Did your parents or family also collect Do your family and friends know of your collection What do they think Would anyone else covert your collection	Motives Self driven / how developed Peer pressure / historical obligation Secretive / public Social pressure Perceived value / market value	Motives Self awareness How determined Confident / self assured Subject to judgements of others Awareness of desirability
Aesthetics What is it you value about these object * Physical attributes such as substrate * Original use in a specific context * Original use value in a specific context * Decoration or design applied and how it contributes to whole	Aesthetics Connection with object(s) / collection The matter (hyle) The aspect (eidos) The attributed value (telos) The bringing together (apophainesthai)	Aesthetics Subject / visceral / historical Tactile Fundamental interest in subject represented Use and value of object within Aesthetic
The Activity When did you start Why did you start Do you share it with anyone else How often are you actively engaged with your collection What does this activity consist of	The Activity Age begun Initial impetus Sole or group activity Frequency How interacts with collection	The Activity Timeframe External influences Secretive / value free / need to connect Compulsion / level of engagement Intensity of relationship

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Question mapping

Questions for collectors	What I want to know	Why do I?
Curatorship Where do you keep your collection Is it on display Do you show it to anyone else How is it kept Do you keep a data base / log book / record of critical information Do you use technology to help you	Curatorship Specific location Physically visible or protected Sharing / lone activity Open to elements / risk Documentation Data bases / technology	Curatorship Importance put on it Accessible Pride / secrecy Level of care Importance of currency Tactile or data based
Broader Context - lifestyle Are there things that you DON'T do so that you CAN do this How much time do you think that you have spent on your collection How much money do you think that you have spent on your collection Do you regard your collection as a hobby or artistic endeavor	Broader Context - lifestyle Economical issues / with others Absorption Financial burden / planning Aesthetic value	Broader Context - lifestyle Sacrifices made / relationship / choices Devotion Willingness to divert funds for self us Perceptions of individuals
History and future Have you ever had a collection that you have disposed of How do you feel about your collection What would you do if you lost your collection Does the collection have a value outside your own possession Does your collection give you any particular emotions Would there be any circumstances when you could not continue collecting Is there a sense that you could ever complete your collection	History and future Space / financial gain Connections / passion Security / investment of emotions / finance Maintains a value and currency Simple pleasure of objects Future restrictions/cost/space/relationships/motivations Target	History and future Long term connection / emotional link Intimacy of relationship Material value placed on objects Heritage / legacy / investment Self actualization / ultimate purpose Hopes fears Is it a lifestyle or about the objects
Can you imagine doing this for the next 10 / 20 years Will it be possible to enjoy your collection if you stop actively growing it	Future prospects Future restrictions	Longevity / deep meaning Active involvement / pleasure of objects

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Appendix 9: Participant information sheet 1

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Study title: A Study into the Nature of Collecting and What the Changing Implications are in a Digital Age: Do people such as beer tickers and train spotters who 'collect' intangibles have the same motivations as collectors of material objects.

Dear

I discussed with you the nature of the study I was undertaking and asked if you could complete a participant agreement for me. Please could you read the following, and if you are in agreement with the statement then please sign and date this and return to me in the envelope included, keeping one copy for yourself as reference.

Many thanks for your interest in this project
Margot Swift

Invitation

I would like to invite you to take part in my study. Before you decide I would like you to understand why the project is being done and what it would involve for you. Please ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to collect information about how and why people are collectors or have 'collections', in particular those 'collections' with low intrinsic value. This is because I am interested in the motivations behind such activity in comparison to those who collect material objects of worth.

Why have I been invited to take part in this study?

You are being invited to take part in this study because I am aware that you are a collector of sorts.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide to join the study. If you agree to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign this consent form.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part in the study. I will ask you questions about your habits and collections using a dictaphone to record your answers. I may take photographs of your collections if you agree. A follow up visit may be arranged if that is necessary to clarify some points, or take further photos if this is agreeable to yourself.

What will I have to do?

If you agree to take part in the study I will ask you to sign this consent form and keep a copy as reference for yourself. This will say that I can collect and record information about your collecting habits. We can meet at a place which is most comfortable for you.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There should be no disadvantages or risks to taking part in the study. The best method of recording any documentation that you show me is to take photographs using a digital camera however I will not take pictures which could identify you. Before I leave you I will show you the pictures so you can check them and give your approval for me to use them.

Appendix 10: Participant information sheet 2

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There may be no direct benefit to you if you take part. However, the information I gather will help to shed light on contemporary collecting practices.

What if there is a problem?

You should not be harmed if you agree to take part in the study. However if you feel there is a problem then please do contact me in writing using the address below.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Yes. I shall follow ethical practice and all information about you will be handled in confidence. Any reference to you in the study will be anonymous.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the study may have relevance to a wider audience. I may publish them so they can be read by other academics, people interested in contemporary collecting practices and the general public. If I do this, it will not be possible to identify any individuals who have taken part in the study.

If you would like to receive a summary of the results, I will be pleased to provide one.

Who is organising and funding the study?

This study is sponsored by the University of Huddersfield. This study forms part of a MA by Research at the University of Huddersfield.

Further information and contact details

Margot Swift
Senior Lecturer: CSB12/04, School of Art, Design and Architecture
Queensgate, Huddersfield HD1 3DH
Email: m.swift@hud.ac.uk
Telephone work: 01484 473114

Participant agreement

I agree to participate in this study and for my comments and photographs to be used in the publication of this research, potentially including on-line publishing, exhibition and for academic papers.

I understand that my identity will be protected in any such publications.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Contact details: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 11: Nodes in NVivo

Nodes developed in NVivo9

Increasingly people using technical means to record

Excel spread sheets
PDAs
IPhone apps
Cameras
Dropbox

Sacrificed relationships

2 divorces
2 fiancées
chances of marriage and kids
Career opportunities

Social aspect

Like minded individuals
Regular or occasional
Holidays or longer trips possible

Regard for documentation

Aide memoire
Stored
Transcribed from field notes to other (not all fully done)
Precious
Of no value to others

Industry around (printed and digital)

CAMERA
GOBs guide
Train lists
Bus lists
Data base for ships
Apps

History

Varied background
No particular habits in family
Family traits
Seemed triggered by specific memorable events
Ages 8 & 9 seem important

Appeal

Non-competitive (though is for some)
Self defined limitations and goals
Specific nuances, points of interest
Anorak, badge of honour?
Ability to contribute to wider knowledge

Limitations

Financial
Retirement
Cost of fuel
Time
Fit in around work
Fit in around family
Ambition,
Changes over years
Completion means review

Opportunities

Travel
Wider national social group
Build knowledge
Contribute to publishing

Benefits

Classless
Non physical
Non hierarchical
Non sexual
Non competitive
Competitive
Non fashion
Specific
Choices
Long lasting
Passion
Manageable around lifestyle

To Collect is to Write a Life?

Has directed spending power
Has directed relationships
Has directed travel
Has direct career choices
Diaries
For prolonged period

Differences with collecting 'things'

No real storage issues
Financial implications potentially less
The activity is the acquisition
Will change focus if necessary

General attitude of others

Tolerance
Don't like to be compared
Think others with collections are less worthy

Emotions

Get a buzz
Being a part of something bigger
In control of own world
Absurdity
No one else will understand
Self ridicule
Not wanting to forget

•

Appendix 12: Amended questions for re-interviews front

Questions for collectors (amended in February 2012) for revisits

Attempt to keep answers to manageable length without compromising the quality
Consistency to aid node categorization in Nvivo
Use of Livescribe pen and iphone digital recording, back up and also take field notes
Take photographic references

1	The Person	
	A. Who are you	
	B. Age	
	C. Where do you live	
	D. How do you live - alone / family	
	E. What do you do for work / income	
	F. Do you regard yourself as a systematic person	
	G. Are you an emotional person, do you feel connected with objects	
	H. Do you come from a family of collectors	
2	The Object	
	A. What do you collect	
	B. When did this start	
	C. How did this start	
	D. Do you have more than one collection	
	E. How many do you have of those (precise number or general) which you collect	
	F. Are there things that you would like to collect but can't	
	G. How have things changed over time	
3	The Method	
	A. How do you record your original collection on site	
	B. Has this changed over time	
	C. Do you transfer this onto electronic or other means	
	D. What use do you make of pre-printed lists by publishers	
	E. Does your data feed into any other system / magazine or publication?	
4	Personal definitions and scope	
	A. What are the criteria that you use to regard something as worthy of collecting	
	B. Are these your criteria, shared or the accepted 'norm'	
	C. Why are they so	
	D. What do you think would be outside the remit of your collection	
5	Motives	
	A. Why do you think that you have this collection	
	B. Did your parents or family also collect	
	C. Do your family and friends know of your collection	
	D. What do they think	
	E. Would anyone else covert your collection	
	F. Have you ever sacrificed anything for your collection	
	G. Does your collection have any meaning to anyone else	
	H. If you didn't collect what else would you do	
	I. Given your time again would you still collect	
	J. Do you in any way regard your collection as absurd	
6	Aesthetics	
	A. What is it you value about these object	
	B. Physical attributes such as substrate	
	C. Original use in an historical context	
	D. Original use in a subject specific context	
	E. The decoration or surface design applied	
	F. How it contributes to a whole	
7	The Activity	
	A. How did you first do this	
	B. Has this changed over time	
	C. Do you share it with anyone else	
	D. Are you a competitive collector	
	E. How often are you actively engaged with your collection	

Appendix 14: Variants on collecting subjects, motivations and activities

Interest	Train/tram/bus spotters <small>(opposed to general enthusiasts)</small>	Travel bashers <small>(rail/bus/tram/ports)</small>	Beer / tickers <small>(including breweries)</small>	Bird spotters	Ship spotters	Artefacts <small>(eggs & elephants, mill bottles, vintage Victorian bottles, trading cards, chinolserie)</small>	Ephemera <small>(railway goods or brewing related)</small>
Commercial support	printed guides of stock timetables maps of network magazines websites blogs books	printed guides of stock timetables maps of network magazines websites blogs books travel companies	breweries CAMRA GOBS guide local ale guides Scoopergen blogs apps	magazines websites blogs apps Preservation societies travel companies	annual registers apps magazines	collecting clubs magazines ebay products created to collect collecting fairs	collecting clubs magazines ebay car boot sales collecting fairs
Variations on object	heritage interest steam / deisel / electric buses trams mainline rail underground systems Regional or local National International	travelled track lines termini	Real ales Cask ales Bottled from pump Drunk on premises half / full pints Continental beers New breweries Pubs	Genus native / non native migrant waywards	types of ships	material types sizes shapes colour	anything printed relate to interest cheap souvenir artefacts good clean examples wee
What is sought	engine numbers carriages networks	track travelled distance gauge location	new beers new breweries new pubs	numbers rarities annual lists	histories places of origin cargoes routes in rare locations	rarity novelty momentohistorical interest regional interest	old / rare novelty historical artefacts linked (bits of wire / switches)
Locations	engine sheds goods yards in transit in stations at particular vantage points for photos	home Europe Global Trains Argentina / Spain Sardinia / Australia 90% of uk bus network	local with changing stock regional international Beer festivals	garden day to day locations migrating points known habitats where sitings reported	local with changing stock regional international Rotterdam Athens Beer festivals	holiday locations archeological sites from home / internet swapping clubs / fairs car boot sales shops	Railway enthusiast events Beer festivals collecting fairs antique shops from home / internet
Costs	can be everyday costs rail / bus passes	rail / bus passes high when covering distance	everyday in locality visits to other cities public transport not car trips to Germany / Belgium	petrol costs increased public transport not viable on whole travel abroad	travel to coastal locations travel abroad	travel to fairs costs of item - can be very high depending on object	travel to events travel abroad low costs products though rare items expensive
Sociability	potential for groups share hotels costs	holidays	high - pub environment ok for lone drinkers meet from around country at festivals	always intouch sharing info has travelled with groups meet people in location that have met before share costs	has travelled with groups meet people in location that have met before annual pilgrimages	whilst on holiday / trips with fellow hunters enthusiasts clubs	with likeminded people
Completion	finite numbers at any one time set parameters easy or challenging	smaller targets set parameters all uk / all ports etc	new variants constantly	finite number but rare variants in locations smaller targets set parameters	trading cards fill folders	impossible so specific interests set	
When complete	new variants all time may set new challenges new locations	can't ever stop annual interest from bathchair looking out			storage in boxes attic some lapse / rational can't	storage in boxes swap	

Appendix 15: Motivations of collectors of things and of intangibles

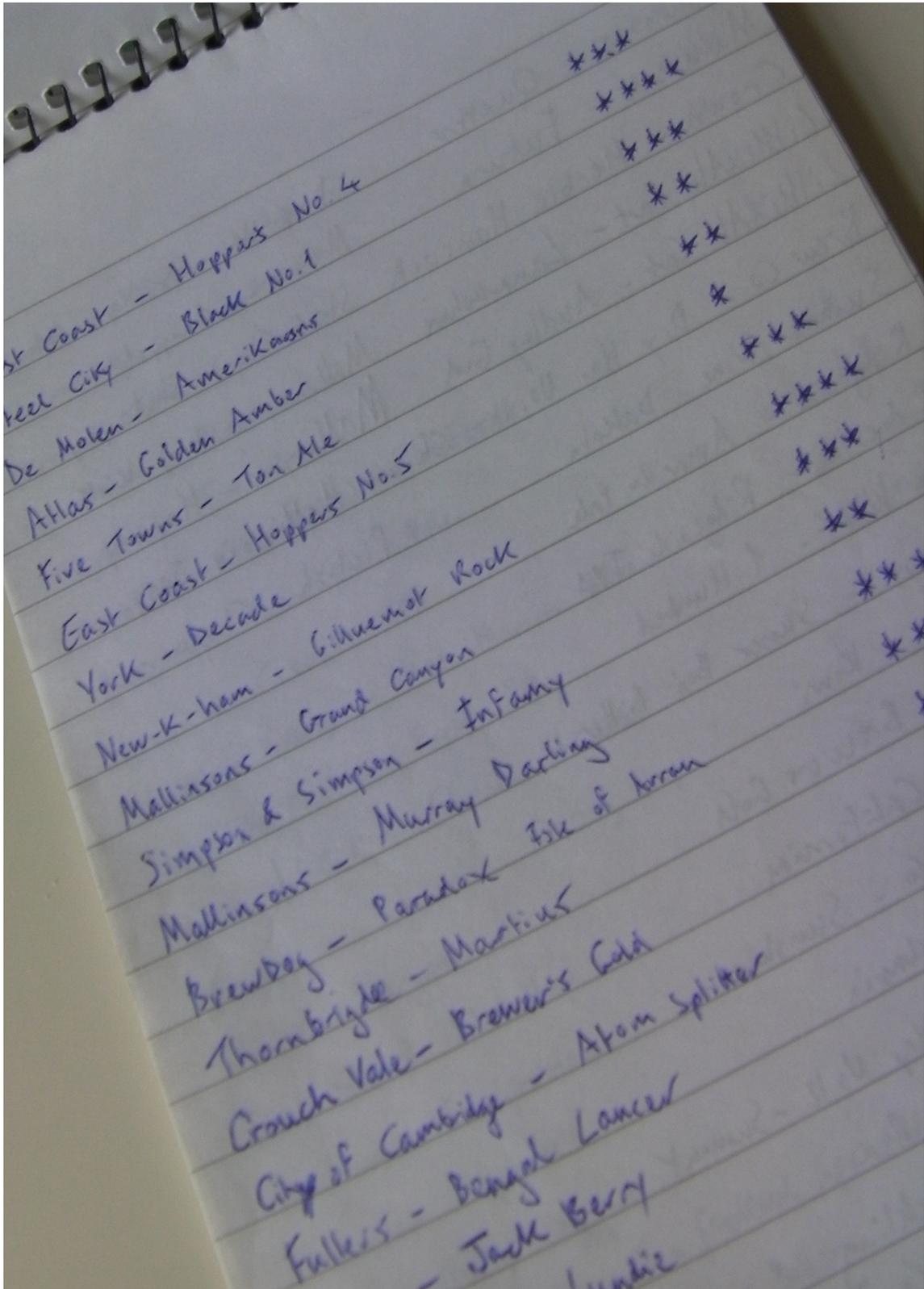
motivations	evidence in collectors of things - historical/secondary	evidence in collecting of things - respondents	evidence in collecting of intangibles - respondents
discovery	unearthed treasure - rusty medallions - Roman and Greek remains	pigeon rings - Victorian bottles - historical interest - car boot sales - eBay	finding a tick - The 'buzz' - adventure, unknown outcomes - train / bird spotters
superstition	religious relics - St Teresa's arm - Amultos exhibition, MuVIM, Valencia Aug 2013	festivals wristbands	
comparisons - taxonomy	wunderkammer - Jubilee Museum Cawthorne	eggs - elephants - bottles - pigeon rings	photographs of types - buses - ships - trams
aesthetic pleasure	distinctions of taste - Uffizi - British Museum - V&A - Bowes Museum	Moorland pottery - touch and feel of sci-fi cards - colours of bottles - textures of eggs	appeal of mechanical objects - patina of objects - birds natural beauty - locations - beer connoisseurs
novelties - rarities	tulips - new products from East	one off items - eggs - elephants - 'special' trading cards / shiny / limited print - search for rare Victorian bottles	small breweries with limited output - hard to find beers - buses in unusual locals - ships from across the world
scientific records / development of	Kew gardens - shifts in historical trends	Rocks	bird spotters - ship spotters - contributions to knowledge by publication
consumer trinkets	Kitsch - mass produced decorative objects	elephants - eggs - decorative pottery made for collecting	
souvenirs - mementos	postcards - tourist trade	postcards - elephants - eggs - fridge magnets - badges	visits to different locations specifically to spot - remembering incidents and people
accessible, everyday objects	ephemera - packaging - spark plugs - bands	cigar milk bottles - pigeon rings - beer mats	regular transport systems - beers in pubs - wildlife around you
cultural capital	the Grand Tour	expensive pottery and fine art	beer tourism - train spotting trips around the world - more exotic and rare birds- birds from other continents
work like activity	US in depression	bottle collector keeping busy - cub scouts	transferring data - keeping records - daily routines for beer ticking - doing not having
interest in recording everyday life	Mass Observation	Digital records of daily life - Blip photo - Instagram - Twitter	train / tram / bus transport systems - shipping - bird spotters
objectification	consumer desire - Marmite 'no noise' -	exchange values stamp collections or traded items - sci-fi cards - Beanie Babies	reappropriation of trains - magazines encouraging collecting
serial collecting	King's store cupboard	trading cards and preprinted sticker albums	beer tickers
desire for completion of collections	Baudrillard	trading cards - all brewery bottles in area - Pottery restricted by cost	importance of unattainable goal - one or two ambitious individuals - bird spotter range of goals
monuments - heritage worth	increase in ephemera values - Robert - museums - King	Opie Pottery resale value - Beanie Babies stored in loft	limited to a few collections - ships photos
sociability	Collectors' clubs	digging up bottles with friends - clubs -	collectors' pub atmosphere - train spotting with school friends - meeting like minded individuals
structure for time		Victorian bottle collector	for all integrates with social life
physicality	museums	enjoy engaging, cleaning and displaying - can be limited by space required	engaged in activity but not subsequently with notebooks except for reference - stored away
managing economics	King buying what didn't need	can become too costly and have to abandon - guilt - pressure from partner	can determine levels of engagement - not requiring large sums
self-regard / status	High aesthetics - fine art snobbery	ownership - value - active trading	wanting what others haven't - biggest total - generally non-competitive
nostalgia / bygone times	Ephemera Society	markers of past - beer mats - tickets	
hoarding	Research by Nordsletten and Mataix-Cols	purposeful acquisition	purposeful acquisition

Appendix 18: Geraldine's beer ticking list 1996

1996 YEAR LIST + TASTING NOTES ***** ①
751 NEW BEERS

DATE	BREWERY + BEER	ABV	PRICE	VENUE	TASTING NOTES
* 2.1.96	HULL - Nuclear Brown Ale	4.6%	-	T+S H	-
* 2.1.96	CALED. Murrays ^{the} Summer	4.3%	-	T+S H	-
* 2.1.96	MARSTON - Union Mild	4.0%	-	T+S H	-
* 4.1.96	WILDS - Yule Lovell	6.5%	£1.60	LRR	Fruity nose - dry mouth, med. hoppy with some grain notes - long hoppy bitter/sweet finish. ***
4.1.96	OAK - Best Bitter	3.9%	£1.30	LRR	Slightly malty nose - malty sweetish mouth - slight hoppiness increasing in med. length finish. ***
4.1.96	BLACKMOOR - Bog Standard B.	4.2%	£1.40	LRR	V. slight cat pee nose (black current) - smooth mouth vanilla ice cream, lively sm. bubbles on tongue - hops come in to longish slightly grapefruity finish. ***
4.1.96	CLARKS - Festival	4.2%	£1.50	LRR	V. pale straw colour, doesn't drink its strength - v. slight bubblegum nose - v. light malt + hop taste - short finish of v. slight hop + malt. Very innocuous watery event. (May well be Trad wrongly labelled) *
4.1.96	BATEMANS Dark Mild			LRR	Bad egg nose - yeasty malty - smooth grain finish. (Barrel tapped to early, v. young + still in sec. form.)
* 6.1.96	HULL - Merry Crumble	5.0%	£1.65	T+S H	Soft fruity nose - fruity tart mouth - dry tart finish. ***
* 6.1.96	MITCHELL - Christmas Cracker	5.5%	£1.77	T+S H	Slight peppery hop nose - light hoppy mouth for ABV - long dry hoppy finish. ***
* 6.1.96	MARSTON - Christmas Beer	4.8%	£1.80	T+S H	Almond nose - v. dry mouth - sweetish in the finish. Straw coloured. ***
6.1.96	HADRIAN T+S Bitter	3.8%	£1.25	T+S H	Fruity malt + hop nose - malty + hoppy taste with a thinish hop finish. ***
6.1.96	BIG LAMP - Bitter	4.0%	£1.25	T+S H	Fresh light hop nose - grapefruity/hoppy mouth - short/med. hop finish fading gradually away. ***
* 7.1.96	WHITESRED Figgles Imperial IPA	5.5%	£?	Old Court House	Toffe mouth leading to med. length hop finish. Fruity nose. Not hoppy enough for true IPA. ***
* 7.1.96	WHITESRED Chesters B B	3.6%	£1.40	Old Court House	Cherry, tart, slightly acidic - not v. lively too old. *
* 7.1.96	RIVERHEAD Sparth Mild	Test	£1.24	R.H. Tap	Roast malt + fruit nos, coffee + burnt grain - burnt malt, fruit + slight licurice taste - hoppy finish. A bit too intense for mild. ***
* 7.1.96	RIVERHEAD Butterfly Bitter	3.8%	£1.32	R.H. Tap	Malty nose, v. light malt + hop taste - light hoppy finish short/med length. Good lunch/session beer. ***
* 7.1.96	RIVERHEAD Deer Hill Porter	4.0%	£1.36	R.H. Tap	Blackcurrent nose - slight blackcurrent taste, some hops - smt slightly hoppy finish. Bit disappointing. ***
* 7.1.96	RIVERHEAD Blackthorn Stout	4.3%	?	R.H. Tap	V. dark with ruby tint. Blackcurrent, lig. + st. vanilla nose - tastes of roast malt + some hops - good choc malt finish. V. tasty. ***

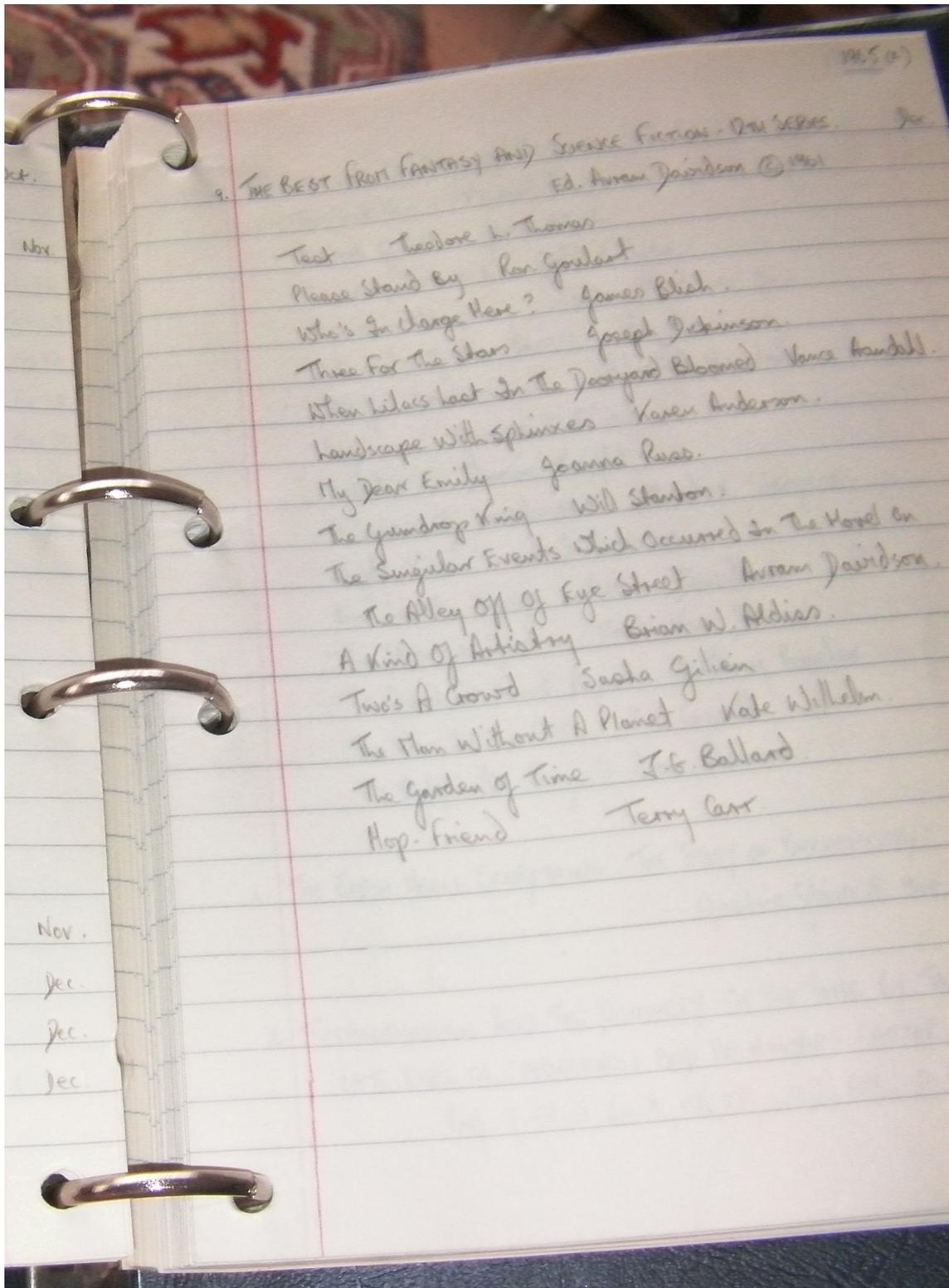
Appendix 19: Tony, the non-ticker's beer ticking book



Appendix 20: Fidel's phone app and workplace library of shipping books



Appendix 21: Ben's list of book he has read



Appendix 22: Annie's eggs that remain on display and milk bottle from the cellar storage



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Lecture 1: Introduction to the course
Lecture 2: The history of what?
Lecture 3: The nineteenth century - Evolutionism in anthropology
Lecture 4: The nineteenth century - Evolutionism in anthropology (continued)
Lecture 5: Durkheim and French sociology
Lecture 6: French Sociology continued
Lecture 7: Boas students and American cultural anthropology - Culture areas, culture history, and memory culture

- Lecture 8: British Social anthropology - from function to structure*
Lecture 9: Structural anthropology
Lecture 12: Social systems and processes
Lecture 13: Interpretive anthropology, part one
Lecture 14: Interpretive anthropology, part two
Lecture 15: Symbolic and Interpretive anthropologies
Lecture 16 from 4/13/10
Lecture 18: Cultural Materialism and material culture
Lecture 18: Post-Post-structuralism, post-processualism
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