

# ***INTRODUCTION***

It seems to be one of the most common questions adult children are asked today by their aging parents, "Why don't you want my stuff?" The parent is frustrated. The child is frustrated. Neither knows what to do with a household of antique and vintage collectibles including fine dining china, art, crystal, silver, Hummels, baseball cards and other items collected over a lifetime.

As a certified auctioneer and appraiser with close to 20 years of experience, I see this constantly and I just wanted to get to the bottom of it. This trend and question has become more and more common each and every year. Parents who are downsizing ask me, "Can you believe my kids don't want this?" And I'm kind of surprised, and happy they don't. We auctioneers used to have to fight off the family members for the antiques and collectibles in a house. It was inevitable and even after we signed a contract to liquidate an estate, some long-lost family member would turn up just to grab a "few things" that they wanted before the auction. A few minutes later, all the valuables were gone. I used to call the extended family "the locust." This was because of their voracity for picking a nice estate auction clean before we got to conduct the sale.

As auctioneers we don't charge a fee, but rather we are paid commission. So, we want to have nice assets to sell. When we are left with the Tupperware and towels there is no money left in it for us. Now this has completely flipped to the point where I am asking myself, "Why doesn't anyone in the family want this?" Not that I am complaining, mind you. Quite the contrary -- our business has been booming with fresh to the

market estate items, many of which have been in families for multiple generations. These once treasured heirlooms passed from generation to generation are now looked upon as a burden.

The younger generations are not interested. I constantly hear them say, "Where am I going to store that?" "It's not my taste." "It doesn't fit my décor."

The parents don't understand, and often are hurt by their children's rejection of their valued collectibles. I have seen actual anger and bad blood over these issues.

It's my sincere hope that this book enlightens both sides in this interesting trend. You will find that it's not new historically, and there are a few good scientific, psychological rationales. I also hope you, your children and other relatives learn something and we can bridge the gap of understanding of the larger issues and market trends. I also believe, like George Carlin, "It's just stuff, so don't get so caught up in it." Relationships are so much more important than stuff. As a child of hoarders and raised by children of the Depression, I saw firsthand how stuff can be so important. I am sure it's why I do what I do for a living and I am in fact a minimalist. Don't tell anyone that! So, let's get started and see what we can both learn about the trends, each other and get all Nostradamus.