

That Might Be Useful: Exploring America's Secondhand Culture

Naton Leslie

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Naton Leslie : That Might Be Useful: Exploring America's Secondhand Culture before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised That Might Be Useful: Exploring America's Secondhand Culture:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. AmazingBy Jill JoinerA unique look into as the secondhand culture. It was a look at the whole culture of secondhand items. Not a how to guide.15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. a look at the antiques and used-goods tradeBy Henry BerryLeslie takes the reader on an enjoyable and instructive journey through the world of flea markets, tag sales, auctions, antique shops, and other outlets where used

and antique items of all ages and price levels exchange hands. Not having much money as well as prompted by the desire to shirk the "rampant materialism" he found in large chain stores, malls, and mainstream retailing, Leslie made the decision to buy only secondhand goods when he needed something despite the extra time this often required, with no guarantee that he would ever find what he was looking for. But before long, these drawbacks were put out of mind as the author became ever more involved in, and fascinated and delighted by what he found in this supposedly marginal, but thriving and populous area of American society. "In the secondhand culture, I have discovered the joys of a genuine American market, unfettered buying and selling, which most first-level retailing has lost." Leslie has become friends with many dealers he has met. The author's ventures into all aspects of this secondhand culture from major international auction houses, regional and local auctions and flea markets, neighborhood tag sales, and also the world's largest and longest flea markets also serve as a guide for anyone wishing to become more involved in this market as either a buyer or seller. Leslie teaches at Siena College in upper New York, which also happens to be a prime area for the secondhand market he was drawn to and colorfully and fully recounts. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Printer error in my copy By JAMIE MCCAULEYI was thoroughly enjoying this book until I reached what was supposed to be page 283 and found a different page number (263) and different font and see along the top of the page Thomas Bilney: A Prelude To The Restoration which is obviously a completely different book that was bound with That Might Be Useful. This error continues to the end of the book so now I don't know how my book ends.

A humorous, trenchant, and entertaining journey to discover the American culture and its relationship to secondhand goods.

From the Back Cover Several years ago, author Naton Leslie decided to opt out of America's dizzying array of retail goods and buy used necessities whenever possible. What he discovered in his meanderings was a characteristically American secondhand culture, replete with a cast of fascinating characters, goods, and venues ranging from the sublime to the bizarre. In the humorous and eminently readable manner of Tony Horwitz and Jonathan Raban, *That Might Be Useful* recounts Leslie's varied journey from well-heeled auction houses dealing exclusively with the estates of the famous, where he finds a desiccated mummy's hand under glass, to suburban tag sales, antique stores, and a rural auction house where the motormouthing auctioneer relies heavily on humor and brevity to move objects he is at a loss for words to describe. While retailers have moved out of downtowns and into malls, and then out into big-box stores, secondhand commerce has remained in communities and off the radar screens of giant corporations. Sales tax records from antique stores, auctions, and eBay might give some measure of the billions of dollars engaged in this commerce of broken farm tractors, American primitive art, and nineteenth-century French bronzes. But the many transactions made under the table through yard sales, flea markets, and other less visible settings are unquantifiable. It is a facet of American culture that pays scant attention to new retail advertising, and that mocks mainstream megacapitalism by thriving on the American tradition of reuse rooted in practicality, frugality, and ingenuity. *That Might Be Useful* will appeal to antiques collectors, junk pickers, tool collectors, lovers of PBS's *Antiques Roadshow*, and all who like entertaining stories about people passionate for the buying and selling of items from our distant and recent past.