

Do Books Make Better Souvenirs? An Exploration of Souvenir Value for the Book Industry

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Abstract

While the value and typologies of souvenirs and souvenir buyers has been explored through previous research (Gordon 1986, Littrell et al 1994, Timothy 2005, Wilkins 2011, Swanson and Timothy 2012, Paraskevaidis and Andriotis 2015, Olalere 2017, Boztug 2015, Amaro et al 2020), books as souvenirs have hitherto remained unexplored by scholarship. This article addresses this question: why do tourists choose books as souvenirs? Taking an exploratory quantitative analysis approach, this article analyzes data from a survey of 290 readers who bought a book as a souvenir while traveling. The survey respondents were crowdsourced through Field Agent. Using descriptive statistics, cross-tabulation, cluster analysis, and thematic analysis, this article proposes a typology of book souvenir buyers (Typical Tourist, Contemporary Bookish Tourist, and Useful History Tourist), reveals that connection to place is the primary reason that tourists buy a book over other products or books as a souvenir, and emphasizes the role of the gift shop in book souvenir discovery and purchase.

Introduction

The Value of Souvenirs

Previous souvenir research has been highly focused on typologies of souvenir functions and values as well as tourist types and the connection between the two. From a sociological and anthropological perspective, scholars have examined how souvenirs negotiate the 'self' and 'other', separating or reliving 'extraordinary' tourism experiences from the ordinary experiences of everyday life. In this quest to understand the function and social use of souvenirs, Gordon's

(1986) foundational typology has provided an important starting point for other souvenir research. Gordon's list of souvenir functions includes 1) pictorial images (postcards, snapshots, books, etc.), 2) pieces of the rock (things saved from the natural environment), 3), symbolic shorthand (manufactured miniatures or oversized objects), 4) markers (souvenirs that are inscribed with words that locate them in place and time), and 5) local products (such as indigenous food, local clothing and crafts, etc.).

Tourism studies draws heavily from sociological and anthropological research. It is in tourism studies that most of the souvenir research stems, building on typologies such as Gordon's. Littrell et al (1994) introduce four tourism styles when it comes to buying souvenirs: ethnic, arts, and people; history and parks; urban entertainment; active outdoor. This typology has been frequently used by subsequent tourism studies scholars in further souvenir investigations. Timothy (2005) identifies 7 reasons that people shop while traveling: 1) a desire for keepsakes, 2) a quest for authenticity, 3) novelty-seeking, 4) functional needs, 5) boredom/excess time, 6) buying gifts for people at home, and 7) altruism.

From a consumer behavior perspective, Wilkins (2011) discusses souvenirs as fulfilling three functions: as gifts, as memories, and as evidence. Swanson and Timothy (2012) identify souvenirs as both 'messengers of meaning' as well as tradable commodities. It is partially due to this intersection—to the value of souvenirs as being both monetary and extending beyond the monetary—that provides such fruitful interaction amongst anthropologists, sociologists, tourism researchers, and consumer behaviorists.

Building on the work of Marx and Baudrillard, Paraskevaidis and Andriotis (2015) argue that there are three types of value when it comes to souvenirs: use-value, exchange-value, and sign-value. Use-value is the usefulness of the souvenir in daily life, exchange-value is the amount of money spent on the souvenir, and sign-value is the perceived prestige, luxury, and power associated with rare souvenirs (in contrast to mass-produced souvenirs).

Studies by Amaro et al (2020) and Olalere (2017) focus on the souvenir attributes that impact what tourists purchase and how much they spend. Amaro et al (2020) identified quality, gift appropriateness, and the name/design of the visited place to be the most valued souvenir attributes by tourists.

There is a solid foundation of previous research on souvenir value, tourist typologies, and souvenir typologies to position the souvenir experience. However, what this paper adds to the discussion is to further develop tourist and souvenir typologies specifically for tourists who buy books as souvenirs over other products. This paper utilizes the survey method, which is a

common method used in other souvenir studies (Littrell et al 1994, Swanson and Horridge 2004, Collins-Kreiner and Zins 2011, Wilkins 2011, Boztug et al 2015, Olalere 2017, Rodriguez et al 2018, Amaro et al 2020).

The Value of Books as Souvenirs

Books have never been the focus of an investigation of souvenir value and consumer behavior. This is likely because in comparison to other products, books are not typically the most popular souvenir item. For example, Amaro et al. (2020) found that only 7% of respondents to their questionnaire chose a book specifically as a souvenir. Magnets, t-shirts, and keychains were much more typical souvenir choices. Additionally, souvenir studies have been quite varied in how often books are bought as souvenirs. For example, Wilkins' study found that 27% of male and 28.3% of female respondents were often, or always, purchasing souvenirs that were 'published material on the destination/region such as books, magazines, etc' and Littrell et al (1994) questionnaire revealed that 40% of respondents typically bought books as souvenirs. Since these datapoints present from 7% to 40% and across a range of decades, it makes it very difficult to pinpoint the exact popularity of books as souvenirs.

It's impossible to know exactly how large the market is for books as souvenirs, but here are some data points in the general area to contextualize things. In 2020, the sales of gift, novelty, and souvenir stores in the U.S. was at approximately 13.6 billion U.S. dollars.¹ Book industry data doesn't capture books bought as souvenirs, other than as part of the much larger 'gift' book market of the 'travel' book market. Neither of these markets fully encompasses or describes the books-as-souvenirs audience. The book as a print object has been thriving despite COVID, with an 8.2% increase from 2019 to 2020 and an 8.9% increase from 2020 to 2021 in terms of print book sales in the U.S., according to NPD BookScan. Though travel book sales were down in 2021 due to COVID travel limitations, 2022 has already seen sales 40% up from the previous year.

Books have a particular value as souvenirs, especially if we incorporate Paraskevaïdis and Andriotis's use value, exchange value, and sign value (2015). A traveler may purchase a book for its usefulness value as a cookbook, hiking guide, etc., for its monetary/exchange value as a rare book or a coffee-table book with high production values, or for its symbolic/sign value as a collectible item. Since books include words and information, they can have increased usefulness during and after the trip compared to other types of souvenirs. Books are also not as 'cheap' a commodity as most other souvenirs, such as magnets and keychains, which means they have a higher price and exchange value. However, books are generally mass-produced; even small

¹<https://www.statista.com/statistics/197723/annual-gift-and-souvenir-store-sales-in-the-us-since-1992/>

publishers utilize print runs of at least 1000 copies to minimize cost per unit. Therefore, books can be seen as less unique or ‘authentic’ to a place than other items.

Given these characteristics of books as souvenirs, why do tourists buy books as souvenirs over other products? How does the value of the souvenir apply specifically to books? And what is the role of place in books as souvenirs? These are the questions that drive this research, with the aim to offer practical applications for the book publishing industry to reach tourists and the souvenir market. As Wilkins asserted, ‘Despite the considerable previous research into souvenirs and purchase behavior, little research exists that investigates the motivations for souvenir purchase’ (2011, p. 239).

Methodology

This article utilizes a quantitative exploratory research method through survey data to answer this research question: Why do tourists choose books as souvenirs?

The survey questions were developed using the theoretical framework of use, exchange, and sign value as defined, proposed, and applied by Paraskevaïdis and Andriotis (2015), built on social theory from Marx and Baudrillard. There were 290 respondents to the 9-question survey, and all of these respondents answered ‘yes’ to a screening question that asked ‘have you bought a book as a souvenir while traveling?’ The online survey was open to respondents for one week, from March 20, 2019 to March 27, 2019. (See Appendix 1 to view the entire list of survey questions.) The survey was conducted through the crowdsourcing consumer research tool: Field Agent. Crowdsourcing consumer research tool use for collecting survey data has been on the rise; approximately 15,000 papers using the crowdsourcing consumer research tool Mechanical Turk were published from 2006 to 2014 (Chandler and Shapiro 2016). Crowdsourcing consumer research tools have been shown to be more demographically diverse and less expensive to reach participants (Goodman and Paolacci 2017, p. 196). Weinberg et al (2014), in their comparison of samples from both population-based samples and crowdsourced recruitment through online crowdsourcing platforms found that the actual results of their experiments were very similar, particularly when demographic differences were taken into account; ‘indicators of data quality were actually slightly better among the crowdsource subjects’ (p. 292). One of the reasons that crowdsourcing the sample of participants through Field Agent was reasonable for this particular survey was that in order to gather meaningful data that answered the research question, the participants of the survey needed to self select that they had purchased a book as a souvenir while traveling. This criterion made it impossible to identify a list of the population, and while other survey research has approached this dilemma through paper surveys at the location of sale of a book (like a physical bookstore: Frost, 2017), rooting the survey in a physical location was

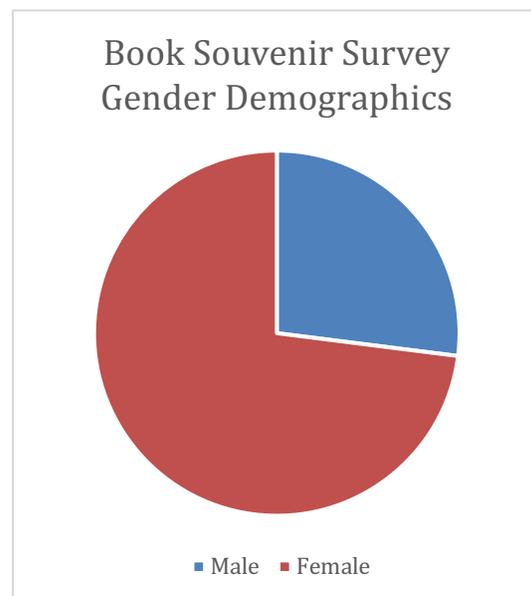
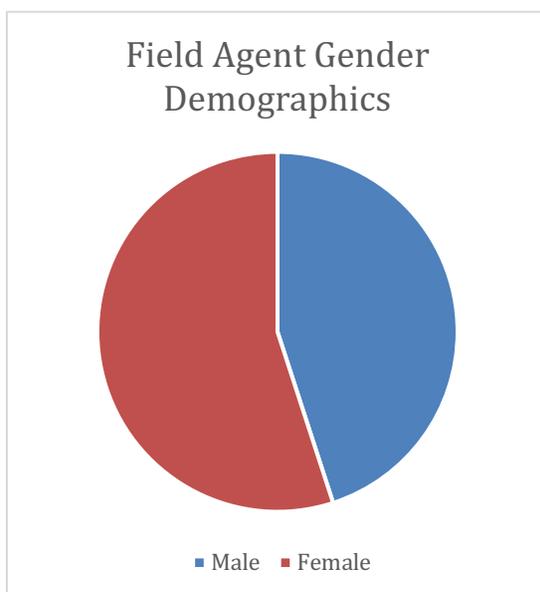
not only more time-intensive, but would then not offer any results for places of purchase beyond the types of locations in which the surveys were being physically administered.

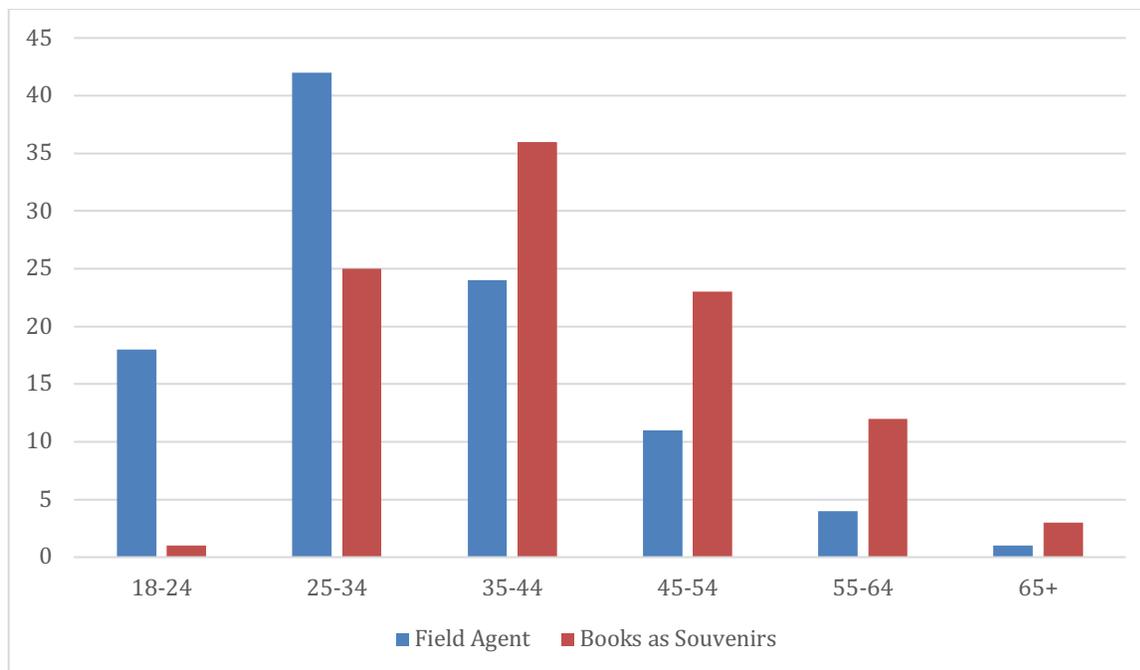
For the multiple-choice and yes-no questions, data were analyzed in SPSS using two-step cluster analysis, descriptive statistics, and crosstabbing of particular subsections of the sample. Cluster analysis is a statistical model that organizes data into groups (clusters) based on their relatedness and relationships. Other scholars have used cluster analysis to segment tourist groups, such as Rodriguez et al. (2018) and Boztug et al. (2015). A two-step cluster analysis was chosen over other clustering analyses (such as k-means clustering and hierarchal clustering, used by Rodriguez et al and Boztug respectfully) because two-step clustering allows the researcher to work with both types of variables: continuous and categorical.

Based on the cluster analysis, a typology of book souvenir buyers was developed. The only open-ended question in the survey was the final question, which asked consumers about what they did with the book they bought as a souvenir after they returned home from the trip. Thematic coding as a method of content analysis and pattern recognition was utilized to sort through the data from this open-ended question.

Findings and Discussion

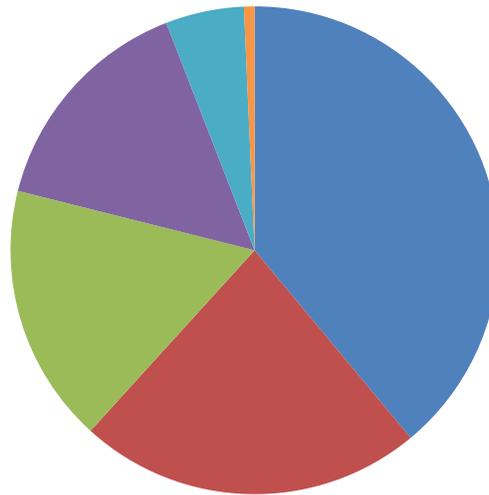
Descriptive Statistics





The demographics of Field Agent participants overall are quite split between female (55%) and male (45%) users. The largest age category is 25-34, with 31 being the median age. The majority of Field Agent participants are white (65%) and the largest income bracket is \$35,000. In terms of the demographics of this specific survey results, the majority of survey respondents were female (73%) and aged 35-44 (36%). Therefore, the sample of people who had bought books as souvenirs and responded to the survey were more heavily female and slightly older than the overall demographics for Field Agent. This difference in demographics may also be influenced by the tendency for respondents to be avid readers: the average books read per year (mean) was 21 and the typical number of books read per year (median) was 10. According to the Pew Research Center (2016), ‘Americans read an average (mean) of 12 books per year, while the typical (median) American has read 4 books in the last 12 months’ (Perrin 2016). Given that the qualifying question for the survey was based on the respondent’s purchase of a book as a souvenir, this sample leaning toward avid book readers is not surprising, but still worth noting.

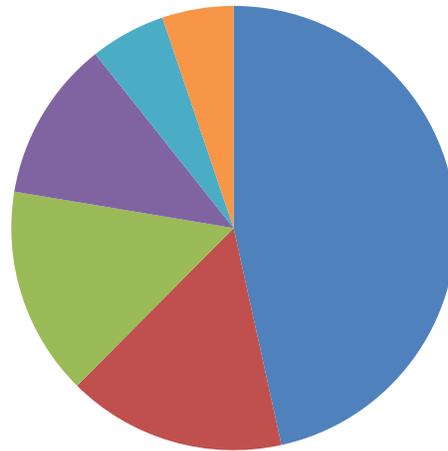
Reasons for buying book as souvenir over other products



- More closely tied to the place I was visiting than other products
- More useful after the trip than other products
- More useful during the trip than other products
- Better gift than other products
- Other
- Price (book was cheaper than other products)

The primary reason why respondents chose to buy a book as a souvenir over other products was because the book was more closely tied to the place they were visiting than other products were (39%). In additional comments, respondents reiterated the importance of the use-value of the book both during and after the trip. The visual nature of books—particularly photo- or illustration-heavy books—was also stressed in the additional comments. One respondent said a book ‘creates a visual memory of the vacation experience.’ In comparison to the other ‘knick knacks’ available as souvenirs, another respondent saw books as being above the mementos that ‘just sit collecting dust.’ Emotion, memory, and sentimentality were all threads within these comments.

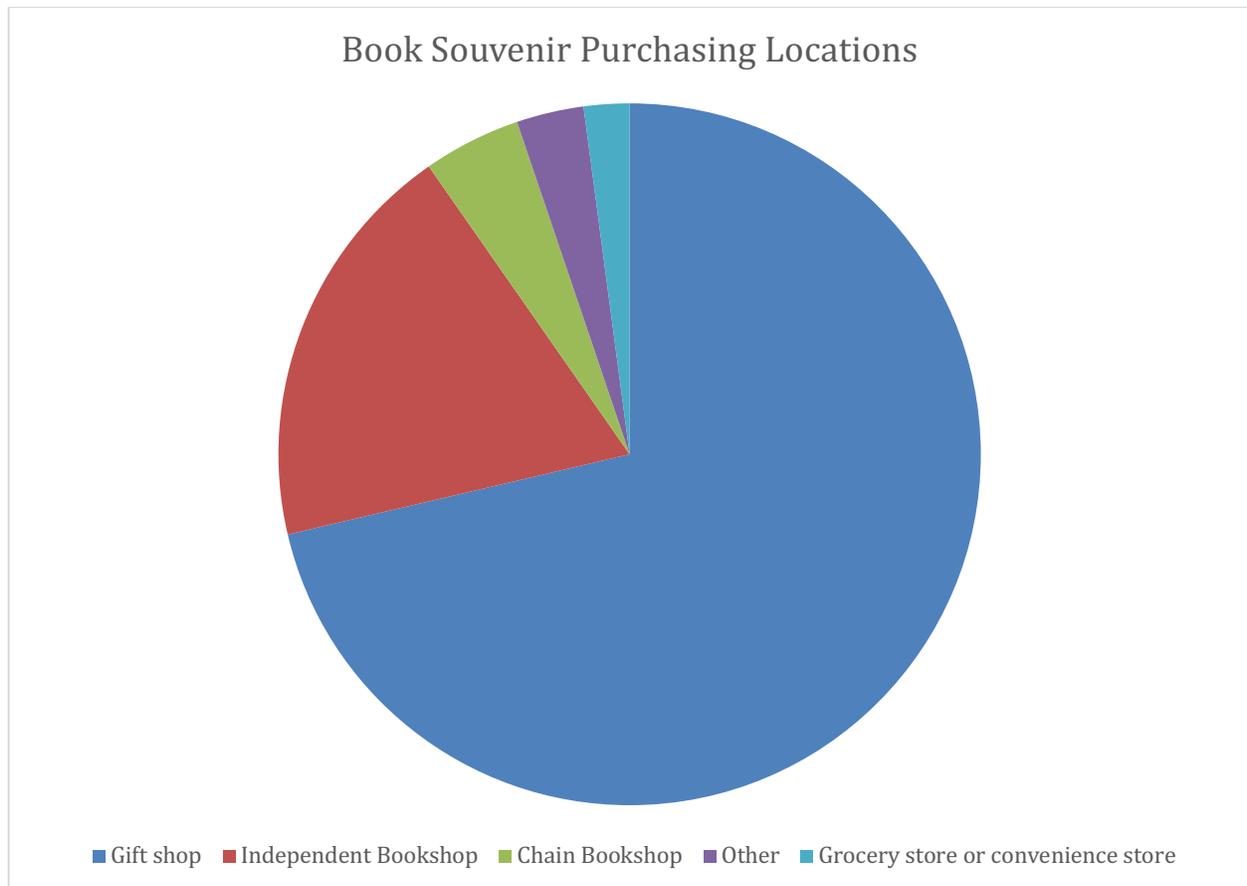
Reasons for buying that specific book as souvenir over other books



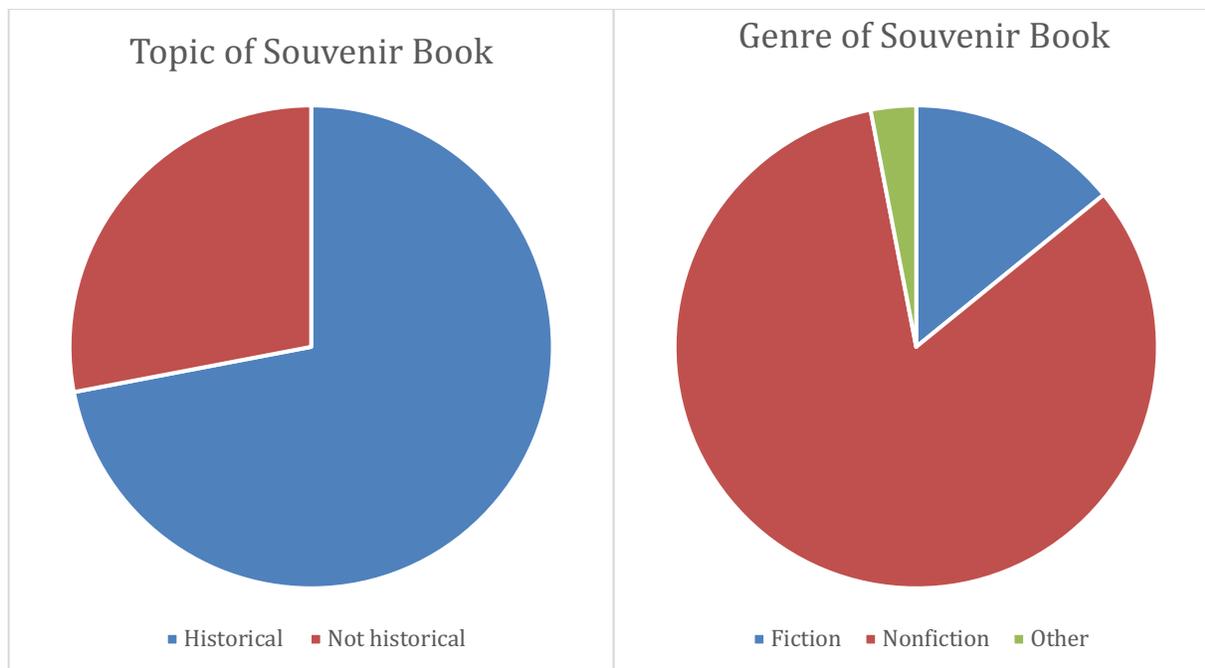
- More closely tied to the place I was visiting than other books
- More useful after the trip than other books
- More useful during the trip than other books
- Better gift than other books
- Other
- Price (book was cheaper than other books)

The primary reason why respondents chose to buy that specific book as a souvenir over other books was because the book was more closely tied to the place they were visiting than other books (46.6%). Unsurprisingly, 90% of respondents said that the topic of the book was tied to the visited place. In additional comments, respondents saw the books as ‘better reminders’ of the travel experience over other books, although it was not always clearly articulated what it was that made books ‘better’ at reminding. Authorship was a recurring theme in the comments, with one respondent asserting that they tried to find books written by local authors with a connection to place, another insisting that the author was the reason they purchased the book. One respondent said that the book format lent itself better to being displayed on a shelf, focusing on displaying as a particular non-reading use of the book souvenir in its afterlife.

Price was the lowest consideration in the list of reasons for buying a book as a souvenir. This data is aligned with other media consumer behavior surveys, where price is a low consideration for readers when buying a book. For example, in the Immersive Media & Books 2020 study, only 9% of book engagers said that price was the most important factor for book purchase, far below considerations such as genre, authors, and reviews (Noorda and Berens 2020).



Overwhelmingly, gift shops were the main outlet through which respondents bought books as souvenirs (71.4%), followed by independent bookstores (19%). In addition to these categories, books were also bought as souvenirs at antique shops, thrift stores, street vendors, airport bookstores, artist studios, and gas stations.



The majority of books purchased as souvenirs were nonfiction (82.4%) and focused on history (72.1%). Within both the nonfiction and fiction categories, photo/art books, children’s books, and cookbooks came up in the additional comments from respondents.

In summary, respondents are largely female and avid readers who are primarily buying books (over other products or other books) because of the books’ connection to place. The books themselves are nonfiction and focused on history, bought in gift shops.

Crosstabulation

Following up on the initial descriptive statistical analysis of this data is a cross-tabulation describing the features of three target respondent demographics: gifters, independent bookshop goers, and place-focused buyers. Crosstabulation allows an exploration of some of the features of and relationships between variables and groups. These three particular groups were chosen because gifting is an important motivation for buying other souvenirs (Timothy 2005, Wilkins 2011, Amaro et al 2020), independent bookshops were the second most common place (after gift shops) for book souvenir purchases and a more prevalent outlet in the book industry, and souvenirs are commonly symbols and mementos of place (Wilkins 2011, Amaro et al 2020).

Gifters were identified as those that said the item made a better gift in either the first or second question of the survey, regarding why they bought the book as a souvenir over other products or other books. These represent 21% (60 responses) of the overall sample. Gifters were less likely

to buy souvenir books that were nonfiction (75% compared to 82%) and tied to the visited place (75% compared to 90%) than overall survey respondents. They were less likely to buy the book souvenirs in a gift shop than the overall survey respondents (62% compared to 71%), and more likely to buy the book souvenir from an independent bookshop (32% compared to 19%).

Independent bookshop goers answered ‘independent book shop’ to where they had purchased the book as a souvenir. They represent 22% (64 responses) of the overall sample. Independent bookshop goers were less likely to buy souvenir books that were nonfiction (75% compared to 82%), tied to visited place (73% compared to 90%) and historical (66% compared to 72%). For the reasons they chose a book as a souvenir over other products, independent bookshop goers were much less likely to buy because it was more closely related to the visited place (17% compared to 39%). *No independent bookshop goers indicated that price was a factor in their decision to buy a book as a souvenir over other products.* The average number of books read per year was the highest for independent bookshop goers of the three crosstabs: 24 compared to 21 for the overall survey respondents.

Place-focused book souvenir buyers were those who said that the item was ‘more closely tied to place’ than other products or other books. They represent 61% (177 responses) of the overall sample. Place-focused book souvenir buyers were more likely to buy souvenir books that were nonfiction (88% compared to 82%), tied to place (97% compared to 90%) and historical (74% compared to 72%). They were more likely to buy the book souvenir from an independent bookshop (77% compared to 71%).

The cross-tabulation of data around these three groups (gifters, independent bookshop goers, and place-focused book souvenir buyers) demonstrates that while gifters and independent book goers are *less* likely to embody the romanticized, historical, and nostalgic perspective of a place through a souvenir book, the place-focused book souvenir buyer is *more* likely to do so. The more important place is to the souvenir book, the more important it is for that book to be historical and nonfiction, bought in a gift shop. Buyers that think beyond place connection for book souvenirs buy them as gifts or go to less conventional and touristy retail outlets, like the independent bookshop.

Cluster Analysis

For the exploratory cluster analysis, 7 items/variables were aggregated into 3 clusters to create a typology of people who buy books as souvenirs: the typical tourist, contemporary bookish tourist, and useful history tourist. Typical Tourists made up 46.8% of the clusters, Contemporary Bookish Tourists made up 27.5%, and Useful History Tourists made up 25.7%.

The 7 items/variables considered were these: why a book over other products, why a book over other books, where the book was purchased, whether the book was fiction or nonfiction, whether the book was connected to the place visited, whether the book was historical, and how many books per year on average respondents read. The silhouette coefficient of the clusters is 0.2, which identifies a fair classification of the clusters (scale of -1 to 1). Whether the book was historical (predictor importance: 1) and why the tourist bought that book over other books (predictor importance 0.85) were the two most important predictors of the clusters.

	Typical Tourists (46.8%)	Contemporary Bookish Tourists (27.5%)	Useful Guidebook Tourists (25.7%)
Book over other products	Price	More useful during the trip	Price
Book over other books	Price	Price	More useful during the trip
Where purchased	Gift shop	Gift shop	Gift shop
Fiction or nonfiction	Nonfiction	Nonfiction	Nonfiction
Book topic tied to visited place?	Yes visited	Yes visited	Yes visited
Historical or non-historical?	Historical	Non-historical	Historical
Median books read per year	10.2	12	10.3

The Typical Tourist: Paraskevaidis and Andriotis (2015) note that the majority of tourists are those that prefer ‘inauthentic mass-produced souvenirs which are usual, ordinary and mundane commodities, just because of their lower price.’ Peters (2011) calls souvenirs bought primarily for price ‘banal souvenirs.’ If we think of the typical tourist and souvenir buyer as one seeking a romanticized, nostalgic experience and procuring a cheap object to commemorate and remember that experience, then our first group of book souvenir buyers is the typical tourist. These buyers base their souvenir purchase primarily on price (compared to other products and other books) and get souvenirs through traditional gift shops. The books these typical tourists purchase is quite typical of souvenir books: nonfiction, historical, and tied to the place the traveler visited.

The Contemporary Bookish Tourist: This buyer of book souvenirs is the most avid reader of the three clusters, with a median of 12 books per year (compared to a median of 10 for the general

survey population). The books they buy as souvenirs are not historical, although they are nonfiction and tied to the visited place. The book is chosen as a souvenir over other products because of its usefulness during the trip.

The Useful History Tourist: This buyer of book souvenirs prioritizes the usefulness of the particular book in comparison to other books. A history of Edinburgh castle would be, for example, a typical book souvenir for a tourist like this. The book is historical nonfiction in nature, tied to a place the tourist has visited, and is more useful than other books during their trips.

Interestingly, price sensitivity (a feature of all three clusters, but particularly the Typical Tourist) does not mean that tourists will only buy cheap books. For one thing, price was overall a low category for the general survey respondents, indicating that high-priced tactile place-based items could do well in this space. Boztug et al (2015) notes that the majority of tourists are hybrid tourists, indicating that they deviate from an established pattern of tourism consumption and ‘consume a range of tourism products with different characteristics.’ Boztug et al’s study found that 57% of all study participants who undertook more than two vacation trips in one year displayed varying travel motivation patterns for the different trips. 39% of study participants had hybrid tourist expenditure, indicating that their consumption of tourism products varied. The hybrid tourist builds on the idea of the hybrid customer, which Ehrnrooth and Gronroos describe as buying ‘cheaper generics and low-end brands on some purchase occasions’ but happily pays for ‘premium-high-end brands’ on other occasions (2013, p. 1793).

Various stakeholders in the book industry will need to take different approaches to capture these three types of book souvenir buyers, but there are also commonalities among them. It’s clear that use-value and price are important considerations for all three groups. Gift shops are a retail partnership must for any publishers wanting visibility to tourists, including these three groups. Publishers should consider particularly their nonfiction titles for souvenirs, as tourists are much less likely to buy fiction books as souvenirs. To reach the largest group—the typical tourist—small and short books would do well for reaching a lower price point that would entice these tourists to buy a book as a souvenir. For contemporary nonfiction titles, the book industry can reach avidly bookish readers by emphasizing the usefulness of the book in comparison to other products that a tourist might buy as a souvenir. Historical nonfiction books linked directly to specific places (such as Pittock Mansion in Portland, Oregon) would prove the most useful and appealing to useful history tourists.

Thematic Coding

The afterlife of the souvenir book—what happens to the book after the person returns home from their trip—reveals more about the purpose, function, use, and value of a souvenir. Through

thematic coding of open responses to the question ‘What did you do with the souvenir when you returned home?’ answers revealed that reading, remembering and collecting, gifting and sharing, and displaying were part of this souvenir afterlife.

Respondents ‘added’ souvenir books to their collections of books or other artifacts from recent travels. The purpose of this was, as one respondent said, so they ‘could look at [the book] whenever I wanted to remember the trip.’ Remembering and preserving led some to keep the souvenir so that they could pass down a bit of history to their children, and served ‘like a journal but better’, presumably in the way the souvenir non-verbally documented the tourist’s experience. Collections ranged from public showcasing to private treasuring in a box, drawer, or closet ‘for safe keeping’, revisited only when the collector brought them out to relive.

Gift giving is a performative and communicative social act in which the gift, the donor, the recipient, and the social environment all play an essential part (Sherry 1983 Larsen and Watson 2001). While there are a variety of possible motivations for giving a gift (de Hooge 2014, and Paolacci et al 2015), one important motivation to discuss in the souvenir gift giving context is as an assertion of self identity. Recipients of souvenir book gifts from survey respondents included friends, children, grandchildren, godchildren, grandparents, significant others, siblings, and future visitors to the traveled location. Sometimes the book was read by the giver before it was given to the recipient and other times the souvenir book was seemingly purchased primarily as a gift. Buying a luxury item like a souvenir can be partially justified financially through the expectation and intention to give the item as a gift, which may be part of the gift giving story for some respondents.

Finally, displaying was another theme in the responses about the afterlives of souvenir books from the survey. It was within responses that discussed displaying that the various spaces into which souvenir books occupied in their afterlives was revealed: from public spaces like the coffee table, home office, living room, and mantel to more private spaces like the bedroom. Sometimes shelves were designated as housing ‘special’ or ‘memory’ books. Much in the same way that gift giving reflects the identity of the giver, displaying also reflects the identity of the displayer. The consumption of products for display in the home plays an important role in identity constructions (Reimer and Leslie 2004). The role of souvenirs both as memories and as evidence (Wilkins 2011) are integral here.

Therefore, one key overarching theme that emerges from the non-reading uses of souvenir books (from collecting to displaying) is that the book functions as a reflection of self. Through gifting, displaying, and collecting the books that they’ve purchased while traveling, owners of books as souvenirs present and share themselves with others. Additionally, whether through gifting,

displaying, sharing, or collecting, the book as a souvenir serves as a touchstone for the particular memories that are forever imbued in the object and that can be accessed as frequently as desired.

Conclusion

This article has addressed this research question: Why do tourists buy books as souvenirs? Through analysis of survey data that included descriptive statistics, cross-tabulation, and cluster analysis, several conclusions were drawn.

Firstly, respondents to the survey as representatives of people who buy books as souvenirs are largely female and avid readers who are primarily buying books as souvenirs because of the connection to place; they buy these nonfiction, historical books in gift shops. Because the nature of books is such that they are content- and word-focused, it's possible that the very nature of books has a greater connection to place (especially the history of place) than other objects, which makes a book an appealing souvenir. Authors and publishers looking to produce and sell books as souvenirs should consider gift shops as the primary retail outlet, followed by independent bookstores.

Secondly, the importance of place to a souvenir book is related to the importance that said book be historical nonfiction and bought in a gift shop. The romanticized, historical, and nostalgic book souvenirs appeal most to the place-focused book souvenir buyer and less to gifters and independent bookshop goers. Buyers that think beyond place connection for book souvenirs buy them as gifts or go to less conventional and touristy retail outlets, like the independent bookshop.

Thirdly, the three primary clusters of book souvenir buyers are Typical Tourists, Contemporary Bookish Tourists, and Useful History Tourists. Usefulness (use-value) and price are important to all groups and gift shops are key places of purchase. Typical Tourists value cheap books, such as smaller and shorter books, that are historical nonfiction and tied to a visited place. Contemporary Bookish Tourists buy contemporary nonfiction titles, are especially avid readers, and value the usefulness of the book in comparison to other products as a souvenir. Useful History Tourists value historical nonfiction books that are linked directly to specific places and, therefore, are most useful and appealing (compared to other books) to use during the trip.

Fourthly, tourists read, collect, gift, and display their souvenir books when they return from the trip. These activities are a reflection and expression of self-identity. Even though gifting was prominent in the responses to the question about what happened to the souvenir book after the trip, it was ranked one of the lowest in reasons for buying a book as a souvenir. This suggests that while books might become gifts after travelers return home, they may not always be purchased

initially as gifts. It might also suggest that what makes a good gift can vary so greatly depending on the donor and the recipient that 'making a good gift' does not serve a useful purpose and criteria for purchase.

As with any study, there are limitations in the scope and method of this particular study. While exploratory quantitative analysis through survey data allows a concrete look into the motivations book souvenir buyers, the primarily multiple-choice structure of survey questions does not allow for the nuance that other more qualitative methods could provide to enrich the narrative of which this article has made a start. The respondents of this survey were all from the United States, and further research would do well to compare this data to the motivations behind book purchases for souvenirs in other countries. Additionally, future research could collect data about the particular locations at which travelers are more likely to buy souvenirs, examining if American book souvenir purchasers are more likely to buy books as souvenirs when traveling nationally in comparison to international travel, for example. Despite the limitations of this research, this article offers an important analysis of books as souvenirs, an otherwise unexplored area.

Biographical Note

Dr. Rachel Noorda is Director of Book Publishing and Associate Professor of English at Portland State University. Her research interests and expertise include twenty-first century book culture, literary sociology, small business marketing, the marketing entrepreneurship interface, and international marketing. Dr. Noorda can be reached at rnoorda@pdx.edu.

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