

No Thanks Mom

The
Top Ten Objects
Your Kids
Do NOT Want
(and what to do
with them)

by Elizabeth
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THE SAVVY APPRAISER



No Thanks Mom: The Top Ten Objects Your Kids Do NOT Want (and what to do with them)

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THE PERSONALITY OF THE AMERICAN HOME



Traditionalists, aka "The Silent Generation"

(born 1928-1945)

Who are they?

Babies of the Great Depression
Space conquest youths
Committed to spouse, country
and corporation

What are their priorities?

Goal oriented
Pocketbook conscious
Family and group centered

What do their houses say to you?

Be respectful and stable:
home is our anchor.



Baby Boomers

(born 1946-1964)

American Dream babies
Post-War, Cold War, and
sexual revolution babies

Highest divorce rate and second
marriage rate in history

Children and youth centered
Big spenders
Self-improvement focused
Status oriented

Be either needed or important.



GENERATIONS OF PEOPLE WHO OWN "STUFF"



Gen Xers

(born 1965-1980)

Babies of working moms

Video game babies

First generation to experience
an economic downturn

Globally minded

Big spenders

Education and technology focused

Anti-status oriented

Be worthy, interesting, and valuable.



Millennials*

(born 1981-1997)

Babies of divorce and the recession

Digital media natives

The center of economic and environmental
universe, for better or worse

Personally focused

Balanced spenders

Civic-ideal centered

Socially oriented and socially critical

Be creative and bright. Act with integrity.





Traditionalists, aka “The Silent Generation”

(born 1928-1945)

Who’s welcome?

Family and long-term
friends (by invitation)

What is “home” to them?

Dependable space, maintained over
time. Home is an institution.

When is it “Home”?

“6 p.m. homes”

Gifting style

Thoughtful gifters

Housekeeping style

Self-maintained spaces, with mom as
housekeeper, dad as odd-jobber



Baby Boomers

(born 1946-1964)

People who matter or who need help;
their kids and their kids’ friends

Home is a status symbol

“8 p.m. homes”

Status gifters

Delayed housekeeping;
housecleaning low on the list





Gen Xers

(born 1965-1980)

Worthy people, guests with similar interests and education

Self-curated, “skilled” home, “pricey” home

“24/7 homes”

Informational gifters

Hired-out housekeeping

Dumpers of clutter



Millennials

(born 1981-1997)

Supportive people, fellow travelers, extended family, heroes

Home is a flexible, multitasking, social space.

“5 p.m. homes”

Whimsical gifters

Flexible, shared housekeeping

Floors as “catch-all” spaces





Traditionalists, aka “The Silent Generation”

(born 1928-1945)

Types of objects in the home

“Paid for” merchandise
Collectors of models, series,
similar types of objects
Respect for the old and time-honored
Objects of obligations and tradition
Objects for routines and chores
“Honoring” objects, group identity,
history, and sentimental objects
Lifetime owners of objects
“Family tree” objects



Baby Boomers

(born 1946-1964)

“Credit” merchandise
Collectors of “recognition” objects
“Look at me” and youth-related objects
Impressive objects, such as sports
memorabilia and expensive wines
Lovers of non-routine objects
Unconventional or
counter-culture collectors
Displays of the unique and special
Objects that stand for relationships
Brand name objects
Collectors of adventure-related objects
“Life’s victory” collections





Gen Xers

(born 1965-1980)

Appreciable merchandise
Collectors of information and educational objects
Favorite brand objects, such as must-have technology
Anti-institutional collections
Educated connoisseurs, entitled to the best
Need-based objects
Kitchen gear
Non-sentimental gadgets
Leisure and open-space objects
Collections of grunge or DIY objects, children's technology
Collections merged with partner's collections
"Moneyed" objects and good clothing



Millennials

(born 1981-1997)

Smart merchandise, the "latest" objects
Collectors of experience-related objects and images
"The Personal Touch" objects
Home and workspace objects mixed
Woodsy/natural objects
Game-related objects
Unique, sustainable baby clothes and kid gear
Friend-centered purchases
"Responsible" socially aware objects
Networked objects
Fun, non-authoritative objects
Humble objects and creative, handmade objects
Antique accents, grandparents' shrines





Traditionalists, aka “The Silent Generation”

(born 1928-1945)

Spaces

- Organized interior settings
 - Nuclear family spaces
- Community spaces (pool, barbecue, tennis)
 - Owned and paid for spaces
- Complete home/work separation
 - Quality, long-term spaces
- Household work spaces and hobby spaces
 - Hierarchical spaces
 - Institutionalized spaces:
 - dining room, TV room
 - “Follow the rules” spaces
- Dedicated spaces for certain objects,
 - such as printed materials, garden
 - and housekeeping materials, china
- Spaces for both resourceful
 - objects and retained objects



Baby Boomers

(born 1946-1964)

- Suspicious of parent’s spaces and style
 - Child or team-centered spaces
 - Spaces as status markers
 - Two homes
 - Shared spaces with partners
- Quality or conspicuous environments
 - Work and family spaces distinct
 - Youth spaces: kid’s rooms, game room, entertainment centers
- Communication spaces (phones on 24/7)
 - Spaces for framed photos, diplomas, awards, club and group affiliations
 - Curators of objects which
 - show upward mobility





Gen Xers

(born 1965-1980)

Originated in mom's home, but moved around; home is ambiguous
Calming spaces
Themed spaces for shared interests
Streamlined spaces
Independent, not interdependent spaces
Entrepreneurial spaces
Home as sanctuary
Self-sufficient productive spaces
Project and craft spaces
Casual, elegant spaces, with great kitchens
Fun spaces
Rooms as individualized technology spaces



Millennials

(born 1981-1997)

Short-term homes, rentals
Leisure space, outdoor living space
Diverse communities
Cooperative homes, merged space
Techno-space: non-material, wired media
Multi-tasking space
Individual stamp on living spaces: photos of "me/us"
Stimulating environments
Long-term relationship space
Fun, creative spaces, sheds, studios, offices, kitchens
Easy spaces for shared fun, food, music, media
Space for photos, natural objects, pets, relationship markers
"Work from home" spaces





Traditionalists, aka “The Silent Generation”

(born 1928-1945)

Ideal home

Single family house in a stable
community of similar people
A “good” address
Close to leisure activities



Baby Boomers

(born 1946-1964)

After-work space in upper class
community with personalized
amenities and entertainment
Easy commute
Quiet, unobtrusive neighbors

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Gen Xers

(born 1965-1980)

International style
Easy commute to good restaurants
and excellent daycares
Mid-century modern style, or
downtown Boho style



Millennials

(born 1981-1997)

Alternative living spaces, rented spaces
Restored houses, farms, tiny houses
Cooperative work/live communities,
no garage necessary





Photo by Santi Visalli





Elizabeth Stewart, Ph.D. is a 30-year “stuff” veteran, a certified member of the Appraisers Association of America. She analyzes art and antiques for estate planning to ascertain value, and is one of few appraisers nationally qualified in donation appraisals for charity for IRS deduction purposes. She advises on the best places to sell “stuff,” and why certain things are worth keeping.

Her favorite career challenges have included the late Jonathan Winters estate of 160,000 objects, a dot-com executive’s university donation of 20 truckloads of virtual reality, and a 50-year historical research archive of a Guggenheim fellow donated to UCSB. She can also tell you that your formal dinner china is worth NOTHING to your kids.

Elizabeth studies people whose stuff is attached to them. She holds a BA magna cum laude from

Tufts University, a Master’s in Historic Preservation from University of San Diego, and a Doctorate from Pacifica Institute in Mythological Studies with an Emphasis on Material Culture; her dissertation title, *The Material Image: Why Collectors Collect* is a scholarly approach to consumers, collectors, connoisseurs and hoarders. A journalist of ‘stuff’ as well, “Ask the Appraiser” appears weekly in the *Santa Barbara News Press* under the pseudonym “The Gold-digger”; she hosts a weekly radio show covering the arts on KZSB. Her first book, *The Savvy Appraiser: Collect Value Divest*, relates tales of the various categories of objects that people both collect and want to sell. Her second book, *NO THANKS MOM: The Top Ten Objects Your Kids Do Not Want (and what to do with them)* relates tales of the generational conflicts around inheritable objects.

