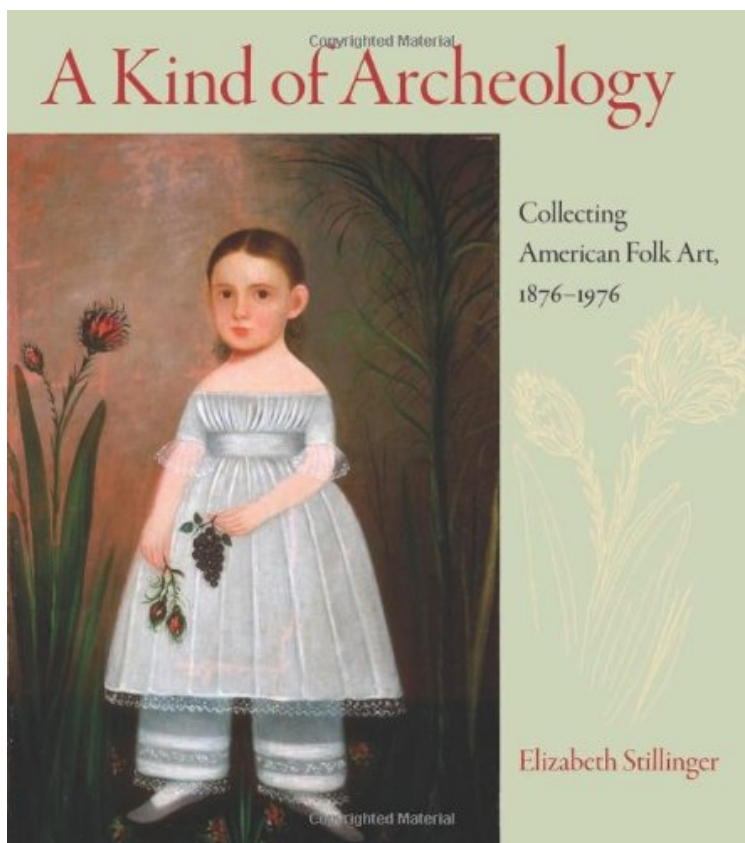


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[Read ebook] A Kind of Archeology: Collecting American Folk Art, 1876-1976

A Kind of Archeology: Collecting American Folk Art, 1876-1976

Elizabeth Stillinger : A Kind of Archeology: Collecting American Folk Art, 1876-1976 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Kind of Archeology: Collecting American Folk Art, 1876-1976:

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One of the best books I have ever readBy Lisa A HammellOne of the best books I have ever read. It was recommended to me by a docent at the Rufus Porter Museum in Maine. An absolute treasure!

This book explores the world of American folk art collectorspeople who saw the beauty and value of the folk-art portraits, weathervanes, and carvings that mainstream America had hitherto relegated to attics, barns, and dust bins. Although pioneer collectors sought out and preserved objects that are today regarded as icons, little has been known of their motivations, aesthetics, or display techniques.Unlike the mainly white, professional, male collectors of furniture, silver, and other traditional decorative arts who were the subject of Elizabeth Stillinger's classic study *The Antiquers*,

the earliest folk art collectors were a bohemian crowd made up of women, artists, immigrants, oddballs, and outsiders.

They were drawn to folk art not by its prestige value but by its artistic, instructive, and ethnological significance. *A Kind of Archeology* begins by examining the evolution of the concept of folk art, relating it to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century movements such as romanticism, nationalism, arts and crafts, and colonial revivalism. Four sections follow, each presenting a category of collector: antiquarian and ethnologist, modernist, decorator and aesthete, and patriot and nationalist, and offering portraits of individual collectors and dealers. The book closes with the exhibition *The Flowering of American Folk Art, 1776-1876*, which opened in 1974. The show was so successful that prices shot skyward, and folk objects, after a century of being disregarded, misunderstood, then championed by a few enthusiasts and gradually accepted in a small segment of the art world, finally entered the realm of highly desirable and collectible art.

"American folk art has been studied exhaustively from the standpoint of the objects themselves, but Elizabeth Stillinger's long-awaited book is the first to take a comprehensive look at the material's earliest collectors and their motivations. . . . The clarity of Stillinger's writing makes her extraordinary intellectual synthesis not only accessible but appealing to laymen and scholars alike." *Barbara Luck* "Heavily illustrated and just shy of 450 pages, the book is a sweeping, De Mille-style epic populated by dozens of dealers, collectors, curators and museum directors, many of them remembered for their strident disdain for convention. In her always lucid prose, Stillinger identifies the players and their key contributions to the field's evolution. . . . It is hard to conceive of a more thoughtful or thorough guide." *Antiques and the Arts Weekly* "A masterful overview, *A Kind of Archeology* offers an enduring contribution to histories of American art. Highly recommended." *Choice* "[*A Kind of Archeology*] is a welcome addition to the literature of American folk art and is highly recommended for art libraries." *Art Libraries Society of North America* "Distinguished by its coherent ideas, clear prose, and unusual photographs, *A Kind of Archeology* is a pleasure to read." *ARTnews* "This is a sumptuously illustrated, comprehensive study that will interest art historians, craftspeople, history buffs, and collectors. An Outstanding Title." *University Press Books for Public and Secondary School Libraries* "An interesting research-based book that peeps into the glorious past of American folk art, also explores some of its negative aspects. . . . In fact, going beyond merely encapsulating the timeline of collection and collectors, the art historian has painstakingly pinpointed the fallacies of certain culture culprits in her detailed documentation, based on an extensive research for over a decade and a half." *The Arts Trust* About the Author Elizabeth Stillinger is author of five books, including *The Antiquers* (1980).