

The Reading and Book Buying Habits of Americans

Random House

Submitted by:

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I. Methodology

Methodology

Zogby International was commissioned by Random House]to conduct an online survey of 8218 adults.

A sampling of Zogby International's online panel, which is representative of the adult population of the US, was invited to participate. Slight weights were added for region, party, age, race, religion, and gender to more accurately reflect the population. The margin of error is +/- 1.1 percentage points. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups.

Findings

Where We Buy Books

	Where do you buy books?	Where do you most often buy books?
Online	77	43
Chain bookstores	76	32
Independent bookstores	49	9
Big Box retailers (Target, WalMart)	29	5
Warehouse clubs (Costco, BJ's, Sam's)	27	5
Other	13	5
Not sure	1	2

- Democrats (56%) and independents ((50%) are more likely than are Republicans (41%) to shop at independent bookstores

3. What book format do you most often buy?

Hardcover	43%
Mass market Paperback	26
Trade Paperback	22
Audio Book	2
e-book	--
Other	2
Not sure	5

- American Dream Materialists* (46%) are more likely than are American Dream Spiritualists* (41%) to buy hardcover books
- Men (47%) are more likely to buy hardcover than are women (39%)
- Respondents with 4 children under the age of 17 are more likely to buy a trade paperback (35%)
- Investors are more likely to buy hardcover than are non-investors

*Respondents who believe that the American Dream means material success and that it is possible for their family and most middle-class American to achieve it. American Dream spiritualists believe that they can achieve the American dream through spiritual fulfillment rather than material success. See q49.

4. What bookstores do you frequent?

Barnes & Noble	47%
Borders Books & Music	24
Your local independent bookseller	19
Books-a-Million	6
Waldenbooks	3
B. Dalton in shopping malls	1

5. What online retailers do you frequent?

Amazon.com	66
Barnes & Noble.com	10%
Powells.com	1
Booksense.com	--
Other	8
None	14

6. What kind of books do you buy online? (choose all that apply)

Fiction	50%
History	49
Current events/political/international	46
Biographies	38
Religious/philosophical	30
Mystery/thriller	26
Science/nature	20
Science fiction/fantasy	19
Humor	18
Self-help	18
Financial/Business	17
Puzzles/Games	8
True crime	8
Graphic novels	8
Romance	7
Horror	6
Other	16
Not sure	1
None	11

7. About how much money do you spend online on books every month?

Less than \$5	20%
\$5.00-\$10.00	18
\$11.00-\$20.00	22
\$21-\$30.00	17
\$31.00-\$40.00	8
\$41.00-\$50.00	7
\$51.00-\$60.00	4
More than \$60.00	6

Ease of search and online ratings

	How important is the ease of search online?	How important to you is the number of stars a book has at an online bookseller?
Very important	73	5
Somewhat important	23	41
Somewhat unimportant	2	31
Very unimportant	2	20
Not sure	--	3

10. Do you plan to buy, or do you own, a special e-book reader?

Yes, I plan to buy one	4%
Yes, I own one	3
No, I do not plan to buy one	80
Not sure	13

12. Do you read e-books electronically or print them out to read?

I read them electronically	22%
I print them out to read	17
Not sure	61

Online

	Yes	No	Not sure
Have you purchased e-books?	15	85	1
Have you ever participated in an online book-chat with an author?	5	95	--
Do you browse online for books without knowing exactly what you're looking for?	62	37	1
Do you belong to an online book group?	5	95	--
Do you depend on online reviews for recommendations?	31	64	5

17. On average, how many books do you generally purchase a year for yourself?

Fewer than 10	50%
11-20	24%
More than 20	14%

18. On average, how many books do you generally purchase a year for your family?

Fewer than 10	41%
11-20	28
More than 20	14

19. On average how many books do you generally purchase a year as gifts for others?

Fewer than 10	42%
11-20	30
More than 20	13

20. Does the trend toward bookstores with a “community center” feel make you want to visit and linger at bookstores?

Yes	41%
No	43
Not sure	16

- Democrats (50%) are much more likely than are Republicans (34%) or independents (38%) to want to visit and linger

21. Do you regularly shop at independent booksellers?

Yes	33%
No	64
Not sure	3

- Democrats (40%) and independents (33%) are more likely than are Republicans (26%) to say they regularly shop at independent booksellers

22. Do you ever buy books at any of the following? (**Choose all that apply**)

Airport	39%
Supermarket	26
Drug Store	16
Specialty retailer	12
Other	27
Not sure	20

23. How many books do you buy in a year that you never get around to reading?

1-5	53%
6-11	7
12-15	3
15 or more	2
None	35
Not sure	3

24. How often do you typically read a book

Just once	68%
Twice	18
Three times or more	10
Not sure	

25. What do you usually do with books when you're done with them?

Keep them	57%
Pass them to a friend or family member	20
Give them away	14
Sell them	3
Other	5
Not sure	1

- Young respondents are more likely to keep books after they're done with them than are older respondents

18-29 with passport	73%
18-29 without passport	57
65+ with passport	35%
65+ without passport	33

26. What makes you want to buy a book? (Choose all that apply)

Suggestions from friends and family	60
Book reviews	49
Talk radio	22
Advertising	15
Public radio	15
Bookseller recommendations	14
TV news magazines	7
TV morning shows	5
Jon Stewart	8
Oprah Winfrey	5
Other (record)	29
Not sure	7

- Democrats (58%) and independents (49%) are more likely than are Republican (41%)s to say that book reviews make them want to buy books.
- Respondents who identify themselves as residents of planet earth (62%) are much more likely than are those who self identify as residents of America or their city or town to agree that book reviews make them want to buy a book
- Republicans (32%) are more likely than are independents (23%) or Democrats to agree that hearing about a book on talk radio makes them want to buy it
- Democrats (16%) are more likely than are independents (6%) or Republicans (1%) to agree that seeing a book on Jon Stewart makes them want to buy it
- Investors (27%) and frequent Wal-Mart shoppers (27%) are more likely than are non-investors (18%) and rare/never Wal-Mart shoppers (18%) to say talk radio makes them want to buy books

27. Do you very often, somewhat often , or not at all often go into a bookstore knowing exactly what you're looking for?

Very often	38%
Somewhat often	43
Not at all often	17
Not sure	2

28. When you go into a bookstore for a specific book, do you ever make additional unplanned book purchases?

Yes	77%
No	19
Not sure	4

29. Do you very often, somewhat often , or not at all often go into a bookstore to buy non-book items (**coffee, DVD's, stationery, etc.**)

Very often	5%
Somewhat often	21
Not at all often	73
Not sure	1

Choosing Books

	Yes	No	Not sure
Does placement of a book in a store (front of the store, on tables, etc) influence your purchase?	33	59	9
Do you ever judge a book by its cover?	52	42	5
Do you ever buy a book because of a quote from another author?	35	57	7
If you find a book you enjoy do you make a special effort to look for other books by the same author ?	89	9	2

Younger respondents are more likely than are older respondents to agree that they judge a book by its cover

18-29 with passport	73%
18-29 without passport	57
65+ with a passport	35
65+ without a passport	33

34. Do you like to curl up with a printed book, or would you be comfortable reading books in other formats, for example online, an ebook reader, or a pda?

Printed book	82%
Other formats	11
Not sure	8

35. How many books are you typically reading at one time?

1	55%
2-4	40
More than 4	3
Not sure	2

36. When thinking about most of the books you r read, do you borrow books from the library, or do you own them?

Own them	78
Borrow them	19%
Not sure	3

Borrowing/Lending

	Yes	No	Not sure
Do you often borrow books from friends?	32	66	2
Do you loan books to friends?	71	28	1

Bookstore Habits

	Yes	No	Not sure
Are you a member of a book group?	7	92	1
Do you attend book related functions at your local bookstore?	9	90	1

41. In the past year have you spent more time than usual, less time than usual or about the same amount of time as usual reading books?

More time	23%
Less time	30
About the same amount of time	46
Not sure	1

42. Have you increased the time you spend doing any or all of the following (choose all that apply)

Time online	65%
Time playing computer or video games	18
Time watching TV or movies	37
Other	29
Not sure	7

43. When browsing in a bookstore, what first draws you to a book?

Subject	48%
Author	24
Title	11
Jacket design	7
Reading a few pages	3
Price	1
Jacket copy	1
Quotes, endorsements	1
Bestseller	2
Other (record)	2

44. What was the most important factor in your most recent book purchase?

Subject	43%
Author	29
Good recommendation/word of mouth	11
Reading a few pages	5
Title	4
Price	3
Jacket design	1
Other (record)	2
Not sure	3

45. What is your favorite category of books?

General fiction	22%
History	20
Mystery	14
Biography	5
Memoir	1
Other	32
Not sure	5

- Republicans choose history (24%) more often than do Democrats (15%) or independents (22%)

46. Which bad reading habits will you own up to?

Folding over the pages	35%
Sneaking a peek at the ending before finishing the book	13
Neglecting to return a library book	6
Spilling coffee on your book	4
Writing in your book	8
Other	11
Not sure	23

48. If your life were a book, would it be...?

Mainstream fiction	11%
Mystery	3
Humor	20
Suspense	4
History	9
Satire	16
Inspirational	14
Horror	2
Other	8
Not sure	

49. Which of the following best represents your goals in life?

I believe the American Dream means material success. It is possible for my family and me, and for most middle class Americans, to achieve.	40%
I believe you can achieve the American Dream through spiritual fulfillment rather than material success.	43%
I believe the American Dream means material success. It exists, but is more likely to be attained by my children and not by me.	4%
I believe I cannot achieve the American Dream, whether material or spiritual, nor can most middle class Americans.	13%