

Going once, going twice, I'm sold... on auctions

It has been said that one man's junk is another man's treasure. If you need proof of that do what I did Monday and attend an auction.

Actually, it was the second auction I've been to in the past month and, admittedly, I'm hooked on them.

I just don't know why.

An auction is like a big garage sale. But, curiously, I've never been a fan of those. Probably because the bargain hunters just love to foul up traffic by parking their cars wherever it's handiest to get to the latest pile of junk. Yes, junk. I've got the same beat-up game of Monopoly, the same ugly light fixture and the same toaster that only heats on one side as the guy holding the garage sale. But, I don't feel the need to unload my garbage for \$2 on some schmuck who will only turn around and sell it next year at his garage sale for \$2.50.

But auctions? They're different.

First of all, there's a master of ceremonies—the auctioneer. Hey, it's worth a couple bucks just to listen to these guys

talk for a few hours, even if you can only make out every fifth word.

An auction also allows you to peruse an extensive list of the items available beforehand so you can determine whether it's

a waste of time or not. A garage sale notice will only mention a few of the prime items and there's a good chance that "excellent selection of CDs" will turn out to be two copies of Pat Boone doing heavy metal and a rap group lead by some doofus nicknamed Doggie-doo, or something. With an auction you know prior to the sale the Stromberg Carlson wood wall phone or the Koken barber chair is likely to be the real deal.

With auctions there is also the competition factor. For instance, last month wifey really had her eye on a 100-year-

THIS
'N
THAT



John McGhie

old milk sleigh (Yeah, I know, no home is complete without one.) Well, she fought tooth and nail with one lady who was obviously shy one 100-year-old sleigh and damned if wifey didn't win the bidding. I'm

not sure which pleased her more, winning the bid or getting the sleigh.

With auctions there's also the element of the unknown. Half the time I haven't got a clue what the auctioneer's helpers are holding up or what the items would be used for.

(Quick quiz: Describe or draw any of these items: A pork pail, pine prop pitch gauge-Midland foundry, honey separator, folkly wine egg basket, German stag plate or a Henri II hunt cupboard.)

Auctions allow you a voyeuristic look into someone's life, without having to

endure the agony of watching Big Brother or Survivor. I find it both fascinating and sad to see someone's silver inlaid dining room table being auctioned off. I try to get a mental picture of the family who once sat around the table discussing events of the day and wonder how this table became an item up for grabs.

If you've never attended an auction I recommend you do so. You might just wonder how you ever got along without a 100-year-old milk sleigh.

Dis'n Data

So what kind of message is Stockwell Day trying to send to voters via his commercials showing him in a t-shirt and jeans? (a) That he's a working stiff? (b) That he forgot to get dressed? (c) That he doesn't want another dress shirt ruined by chocolate milk?... I'm sure Justin Trudeau's grief was real, but I got the feeling during the eulogy for his dad Liberal head honchos were salivating at the thought of Pierre's boy entering politics... The crystal ball says Colorado over New Jersey for the Stanley Cup.

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