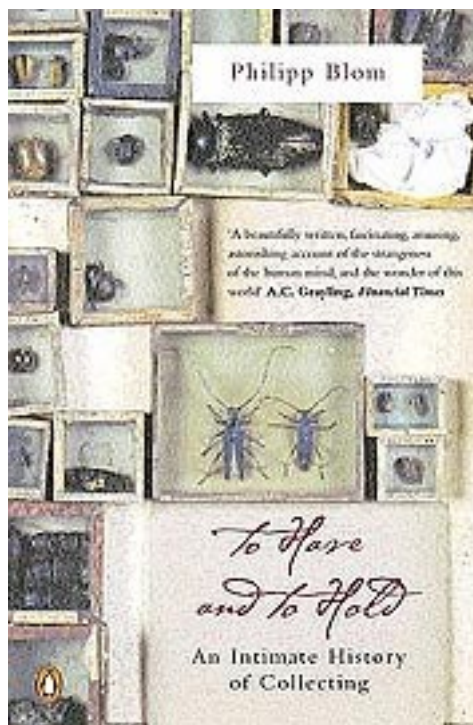


To Have and to Hold



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著者:Jessica Weiss

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Middle-class family life in the 1950s brings to mind images of either smugly satisfied or miserably repressed nuclear families with breadwinning husbands, children and housewives, much like the families depicted in "Ozzie and Harriet" and "Father Knows Best". Jessica Weiss delves beneath these mythic images and paints a far more complex picture that reveals strong continuities between the baby boomer and their parents. Drawing on interviews with American couples from the 1950s to the 1980s, Weiss creates a dynamic portrait of family and social change in the postwar era. She pairs these firsthand accounts with a deft analysis of movies, television shows, magazines and advice books from each decade, providing an unprecedented and

intimate look at ordinary marriages in a time of sweeping cultural change. Weiss shows how young couples in the 1950s attempted to combine egalitarian hopes with traditional gender roles. Middle-class women encouraged their husbands to become involved fathers. Midlife wives and mothers reshaped the labour force and the home by returning to work in the 1960s. And couples strove for fulfilling marriages as they dealt with the pressures of childrearing in the midst of the sexual and divorce revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s. By the 1980s, they were far more welcoming to the ideas of the women's movement than has often been assumed. More than simply changing with the times, the parents of the baby boom contributed to changing times themselves. Weiss's use of family interviews that span three decades, her imaginative examination of popular culture, and her incisive conclusions make her book a valuable contribution not only to our understanding of the past but also to our understanding of men's and women's roles in today's family.

作者介绍:

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