

First Editions

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821 \)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/10/03 7:59 AM

To a book person, a first edition is considered as the first edition, first printing of a book.

[kookidz \(415 \)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/10/03 8:11 AM (# 1 of 39)

Yes, so be sure that your edition isn't a first edition, later printing before you make claims of "first edition" without saying which printing it is in your auction. (You don't want to answer numerous questions nor disappoint your buyers.)

[mpcoakley \(172 \)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/10/03 8:13 AM (# 2 of 39)

ctbooks: Can I post my question here again or will I get yelled at for crossposting?

[satnrose \(4060 \)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/10/03 8:18 AM (# 3 of 39)

To a book collector, a "first edition" is the first printing of the first edition. {Preferably, the first state of the first issue of the first printing of the first edition in the original dustjacket}.

To a publisher, a "first edition" is any printing done of the original edition [i.e., any printing done with the original typeface without alterations.]

As bookdealers, we go with the collectors' definition.

There are a few exceptions, *made by the collectors themselves*, where such books as SECURITY ANALYSIS and ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS are considered to be "first edition" even if a later printing.

Punt.

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821 \)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/10/03 8:22 AM (# 4 of 39)

Text books are also a nice exception where later editions are more desirable.

mpcoakly: You will not be yelled at for cross-posting.

[satnrose \(4060 \)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/10/03 8:49 AM (# 5 of 39)

[How to identify a book club edition](#)

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821 \)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/11/03 5:44 AM (# 6 of 39)

Identification of textbooks regarding edition is, on the whole, easier than any other category of books. Students must have the correct edition for a course. Students must be able to identify the correct edition for a course. Publishers of textbooks are straightforward in stating edition and printing . . . and there's usually an ISBN

Number. Duck soup. Clean. Easy. Fast. Nice.

The second category for easy to identify are university press books, the little problem of book club edition, not withstanding. [See above link.] The university press books that I have encountered state the edition and printing clearly on the copyright page.

In contrast with commercial presses, university presses do not change their names through the years. As an additional bonus, university press books tend to be more robust. Over the years, I have, to my dismay, thumped, bumped, and dumped books from time to time. The university press books tend to withstand normal and abnormal wear and tear.

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821 \)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/11/03 9:27 AM (# 7 of 39)

You all just leap right in here! Trade publications tend to leave me a little nuts, although I like to look for small press publications at book sales.

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821 \)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/12/03 6:10 AM (# 8 of 39)

One of the best overall sources of information on first edition identification is the the book,

First Editions: A Guide to Identification, edited by Edward N. Zembel and Linda A. Verkler. 2001, fourth edition, Spoon River Press. Hardcover, dust jacket, 669 pages. ISBN 0-930358-18-X List Price: \$60.00

This book tracks through publishers in alphabetical order for ease of use. If you find the price a little steep, the third edition is offered numerous places, and is a good reference for those just starting out in the business.

Now let's change topics for a few minutes and we will tie this all back to this nice little reference.

Many of the big name publishers have gone through numerous name changes, acquisitions, mergers, and other corporate business dealings. Every time this happens, other changes happen, too, and that includes the method of labelling first editions. It's called corporate make over or bend over. There are no industry standards. Each company sets its own policy and that policy changes over time.

Now, we're going to tie this back to the little reference. This reference is going to help you track various name changes a company passed through and the permutations on its methods of designating first editions. A fairly simple example is Reynal and Hitchcock which merged with Harcourt, Brace and Co., Inc. in 1948. This information is in the book. Turning to Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc., there is a Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., and a Harcourt Brace and Company. [Since there is no clear statement of tie between Harcourt, Brace & Co., and Harcourt Brace and Company, research elsewhere to see if indeed they are the same corporation.] However, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. did change its name to Harcourt Brace and Company in 1993.

Are we having fun now?

There are indeed drawbacks to this book, sometimes there isn't quite enough detail or the information is not complete enough. Taken as a whole, it provides a wealth of information quickly and easily.

[drzilboorg \(0\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/12/03 6:14 AM (# 9 of 39)

What about Harcourt Brace and World, which happened when World Publishing (a local fave) went away?

[drzilboorg \(0\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/12/03 6:22 AM (# 10 of 39)

Well, I just went to the Harcourt site, (I am bored silly). Now they are part of Reed Elvoisier (sp I'm sure is wrong) which is the big competitor to Ziff Davis on the one hand (computers) and McGraw Hill on the other (construction and most other industries); pretty big in legal abstracts, too.

Anyway, I asked them to explain the difference between the two companies — could be a simple divisional difference, there must be a dozen “Harcourt” named companies under the current umbrella, and a half dozen more that don't have the Harcourt name in the title.

[fine.books \(743\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/12/03 6:23 AM (# 11 of 39)

Yeah, but it doesn't mention what month in 1542 Jacobum Giunctam left Lyon for Venice, leaving the Press in the hands of Theobaldum Paganum.

:(

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/12/03 6:27 AM (# 12 of 39)

fine.books: I bet not!

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/12/03 8:24 AM (# 13 of 39)

I need some feedback here! Is this information useful? Do you want me continue adding to it?

[iainsdad \(626\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/12/03 3:38 PM (# 14 of 39)

Yes please, anything that helps me learn. :-))

Lurker Neil

[satnrose \(4060\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/12/03 3:49 PM (# 15 of 39)

Good to go.

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/13/03 6:19 AM (# 16 of 39)

satnrose: Will you please post your definition of *issue* and *state*. There are five references around me each with a different definition and I'm about to have *fun*.

[satnrose \(4060\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/13/03 4:00 PM (# 17 of 39)

ctbooks: I've seen many definitions of the two terms, some of which are quite complicated. But I'm a minimalist, so, reducto:

When it comes to identifying the differences in books:

- a *state* is an accident.

- an *issue* is deliberate.

Presuming, of course, that we're talking about the differences in the first printing of a particular edition.

A difference in *state* occurs when something happens during the first print run. Something happens to the type, like a letter breaks. Or the publisher suddenly realizes that there's a mistake and stops the presses and corrects their error. Something like that [many possibilities].

A difference in *issue* is a choice or expedient measure taken by the publisher. Choices like using a different binding, a different paper, a different dustjacket. Sometimes part of the first print run is separated and numbered to make a limited edition [although usually the limited edition is done as a separate print run], or a "presentation" issue for friends of the publisher or author.

To confuse the issue, differences in states are called "issue points". To increase the states of confusion, many cataloguers, even professionals, even bibliographers, use the term "state" when they mean "issue" and vice versa. The result is that we, as booksellers, have to use whatever term the bibliographers and/or priceguiders have used, whether it is correct or not...

[psthomas \(918\)](#) (view author's auctions)

11/13/03 9:30 PM (# 18 of 39)

An *accident* occurs in a *state* (e.g. Maryland).

An *issue* occurs when there is a question of *fault*.

An *exception* occurs when the *accident* is in the District of Columbia ...which is *not a state* ...and to which, the license plates say "No Taxation Without Representation".

No matter which *state* and what the *issue*, the police *book* the perp when fault is determined. Lawyers then *read* all the small print, *digest* it, *condense* it and otherwise render it into RDCB form.

Which is by way of introducing today's estate sale in one of the wealthiest sections of the Nation's Capitol. In the little quadrant between Connecticut Avenue, Massachussets Avenue and Rock Creek Park are some of the most expensive houses in the country — most are embassies — some are owned by actual people. One of these was the estate of Thomas Blake Clark — editor for the Reader's Digest from 1944 to 1970, who died February this year. Anyone who thinks that Reader's Digest Condensed Books were worthless needs to take a turn through the Clark household. RDCBs generated millions of actual real live dollars and deposited them in the hands of Mr. Thomas Blake Clark.

There were lots of books in the house. We got there late and probably missed some great stuff. There were some gems left though. But, scattered amongst the this's and that's were genuine drafts of RDCB's — with the "good parts" pencil bracketed, and particularly "good" parts typed onto little yellow pieces of paper and re-inserted into the book. Sometimes there were lots of brackets, sometimes whole chapters were skipped. It was amazing.

Always remember — condensations are for **your** reading pleasure.

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821\)](#) (view author's auctions)

11/14/03 8:32 AM (# 19 of 39)

psthomas does variant humorous posts.

[psthomas \(918\)](#) (view author's auctions)

11/14/03 12:08 PM (# 20 of 39)

The humorous is connected to the leg bone.

And that spells P which rhymes with T

...and we've got trouble ...right here in River City.

...maybe I'll go down to the library and check out Marion.

...perhaps that should be rephrased...

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821 \)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/14/03 1:28 PM (# 21 of 39)

Along your search for first editions, you are going to see some interesting terminology. The following terms have a common thread. They are either located on the copyright page or in a book description. They indicate that the book has been published in a form prior to the current publication.

- first thus
- first American edition
- first trade edition
- first English edition*
- first published edition*
- first separate edition*

*—*ABC for Book Collectors by John Carter*

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821 \)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/14/03 1:46 PM (# 22 of 39)

The following, shown on the copyright page, is also an indicator that the book is not a first edition.

[A repost of mever, a bookbinder](#)

SECOND OR THIRD PRINTING BEFORE PUBLICATION

On books that the publisher knows will be bestsellers, they order their best guess on how many to run. It may be over a million for books like Stephen King. Of course it takes a little while to manufacture that many. In the meantime, some major book retailer (like Barnes and Noble) decides they want to do a special promotion and they order more. So even before the publication date, a reprint takes place.

—*Presented by lludwig*

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821 \)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/14/03 2:03 PM (# 23 of 39)

You will notice that I've posted a whole set of terms without definitions. These terms are defined differently for each book seller. I have references here and can provide definitions from various sources without personal comment. The problem exists that no two book sources can agree on the same definition for any term. If you thought mathematics in high school was great fun, considered what might have happened if no two theorists could agree on a definition or the use of zero.

11/15/03 8:08 AM (# 24 of 39)

As promised, definitions. This is an excruciatingly dull issue or state or variant or something.

- To the book collector, “issue” means an intermediary copy within the first printing of a first edition. “State” is synonymous with “issue”.¹
- *First Issue* has been hairsplit to mean only points corrected after some copies have been circulated, while *First State* to mean a correction made before any distribution has occurred.²
- Issue [is] a term applied to a second printing (impression) of an edition that includes a change or correction—but not a complete setting of type—made after the first impression is printed. Adding to the confusion are “states,” or printings in which changes have been made during the print run.³
- A *first issue* is an intermediate state of the first printing. *First state* is nowadays used virtually interchangeable with “first issue.”⁴
- State: A change that occurs during a print run, such as the correction of a typo, or a change in the binding or dust jacket.⁵
- Issue [is] a distinct set of copies of an edition of a book. An *issue* is distinguishable from other copies or sets of copies of the edition by variations in the printed matter. A printing may contain more than one *issue* if variations on the printed matter occur during the printing. Just as an edition (all the copies made from a setting of type) may comprise more than one impression or printing (all the copies made at one given time), an impression may comprise more than one *state* (all the copies in exactly the same condition with no accidental or deliberate changes).⁶

One further definition is quite useful and I have included it here.

- Variant [is] a general purpose term used to describe a copy or copies of an edition exhibiting some variation, whether of text, title-page, illustrations, paper or binding, from another copy or copies of the same edition. Its use does not necessarily imply that the copy or copies in question are abnormal; in fact, it is most frequently and properly used when doubts exist as to the priority, or even the precise relationship, between the two or more observed variants, and where in consequence no norm has been established.⁷

¹McBride, Bill *Pocket Guide to the Identification of First Editions*, 1995, fifth revised edition, third printing, McBride. Softcover, staple binding, 100 pages.

²McBride, Bill *Points of Issue*, 1996, third edition, first printing, McBride. Softcover, staple binding, 92 pages.

³Tedford, Marie *Official Price Guide to Old Books* 1994, number line: 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2, House of Collectibles. Softcover, 365 pages.

⁴Wright, Nancy *Books Identification and Price Guide*, 1993, number line: 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2, Confident Collector. Softcover, 299 pages.

⁵Russell, Richard *Book Collector's Price Guide*, 2003, Krause Publications. Softcover, 448 pages.

⁶Harmon, William *Handbook to Literature* 1996, seventh edition, Prentice-Hall. Softcover, 669 pages.

⁷Carter, John *ABC for Book Collectors* 1998, seventh edition, Oak Knoll Press. Hardcover, dust jacket, 224 pages.

11/15/03 8:35 AM (# 25 of 39)

There! That was sooooo boring and confusing and contradictory and vague and . . . and . . . and . . . There are a few more terms which I'd like to define which I used in one of the posts above starting with first thus which has

caused virtual fist fights. No matter, it will need to be addressed, too, just not today.

As an aside, remember the word, variant. It will get you out of a hell of a lot of scrapes. Slowly now, var-i-ant. All together. **Var-i-ant**. Good.

[boodust \(0\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/15/03 9:16 AM (# 26 of 39)

Where can I buy the *Handobook*? **Mondo**, man!

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/15/03 9:48 AM (# 27 of 39)

Thankso lotto!

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/17/03 10:38 AM (# 28 of 39)

Dust Jackets

Most modern books have dust jackets. This fragile piece of paper is considered an important part of the book. It is important enough that the lack of a dust jacket will decrease the value of the book.

I have seen dust jackets noted by state with an implied edition, but not by issue or stated edition.

Is it assumed that if a book is called a first edition and the dust jacket is called first state, that the dust jacket is the first edition and first state dust jacket?

Are there such animals as second issue dust jackets?

There are marriages between books and dust jackets where state, issue, and edition are mismatched. How are these books and dust jackets described regarding state, issue, and edition?

[satnrose \(4060\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/17/03 12:07 PM (# 29 of 39)

“first edition in second state dustjacket”

-

[satnrose \(4060\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/17/03 12:07 PM (# 30 of 39)

or “...in later dustjacket...”

[satnrose \(4060\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/17/03 12:09 PM (# 31 of 39)

Actually, the first edition of a book is not always the *preferred* edition.

A good example is THE YEARLING by Marjorie Kennan Rawlings. The true first edition is illustrated by Edward Shenton. The second edition is illustrated by N.C. Wyeth and is twice as valuable.

[fine.books \(743\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/17/03 12:29 PM (# 32 of 39)

One of the best examples is Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*; seldom seen in the first issue of the dustwrapper (with the misprint, "In Our Times," for, "In Our Time."

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/18/03 6:48 AM (# 33 of 39)

In the example given by **fine.books** in the post directly above, the misprinting of the dustwrapper is a *point* as it uniquely identifies the the first issue of the dustwrapper.

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/20/03 4:49 PM (# 34 of 39)

Bump!

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/21/03 1:07 PM (# 35 of 39)

Many techniques used to determine a first edition can also be used to determine other editions or printings.

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

11/25/03 5:31 AM (# 36 of 39)

Thump!

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

12/06/03 12:55 PM (# 37 of 39)

Thump again! If you don't want this one, I'll let it sink to the bottom.

[psthomas \(918\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

12/06/03 2:45 PM (# 38 of 39)

OP: What's the point? State the issue.

[ctbooks_starcomm_net \(821\)](#) ([view author's auctions](#))

12/06/03 5:11 PM (# 39 of 39)

psthomas: I think it is scarce, but not particularly desirable.