

Book formats I love

Aside from the pleasure of reading, books themselves, as objects, have their own pleasures.

I find it strange how differently I feel about different formats of books.

For example, I generally prefer paperbacks over hardbacks. I don't mind hardbacks if they are non-fiction, but I will rarely enjoy reading novels in hardback and I don't buy them, unless it's a new release and I'm desperate to read it. Worst of all are e-books. Again, I don't derive much pleasure from ebooks, except from the convenience of being able to highlight sections and save them for later reference. Also, ebooks aren't so bad for non-fiction but I hate to read novels on them.

Even better, I prefer particular form of paperback known as the mass market paperback. These are the smaller paperbacks. The size is usually around 11cm wide by 17.5cm high. They are more common in the US than the UK (which tends to favour a size format in novels that I absolutely hate: around 13cm by 19.5cm).

The one exception to my general dislike for hardbacks is a format called the travellers hardback. These are small hardbacks – usually the size of a paperback but with a hard cover. I love them! They are a format exclusively sold in airports. However, I haven't seen them in a few years. I used to love them so much that in the past I've actually driven to my nearest airport to buy a new book in that format!

I feel these preferences strongly and automatically. Yet they are irrational and make no sense to me.