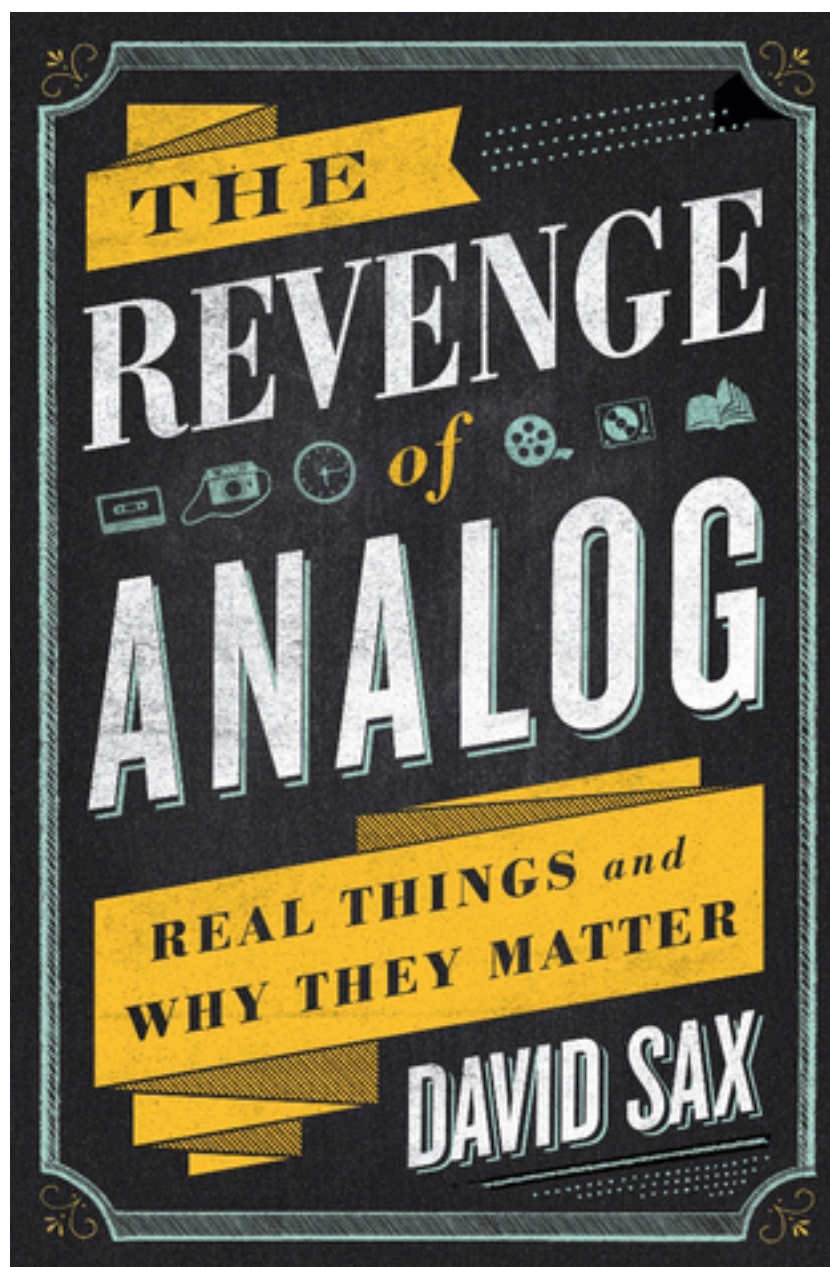


The Revenge of Analog: Real Things and Why They Matter Book PDF Download



By:
David Sax

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1.5* rounded down.

Focusing each chapter on a specific company helps narrow the focus on larger industries to useful, specific anecdotes, but has the unfortunate effect of sounding like breathless advertisements for said company. "The Revenge of Paper" reads like a twenty page shill for Moleskine. Other chapters aren't much better: the resurgence of physical goods felt like less to do with the so-called revenge of analog and more due to the application of clever advertising strategies. Not once

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Focusing each chapter on a specific company helps narrow the focus on larger industries to useful, specific anecdotes, but has the unfortunate effect of sounding like breathless advertisements for said company. "The Revenge of Paper" reads like a twenty page shill for Moleskine. Other chapters aren't much better: the resurgence of physical goods felt like less to do with the so-called revenge of analog and more due to the application of clever advertising strategies. Not once but several times, Sax comes right up to the realization that the "revenge" of analog products has much to do with the acquisition of them as status symbols and then... is too unaware to process this? Doesn't think it's worth discussing?

Throughout the book are quotes like "Print [...] had become a luxury item", and "Books are an aspirational consumer product". Sure, of course. As technology (or nearly anything else) becomes more affordable and commonplace, the goalposts of wealth and status shift. There's a strong socioeconomic factor re: what is marketed as desirable. That's surely worth some consideration; at the very least, it's not negligible. This book repeatedly skates right by that. There are some relevant insights on how analog methods differ from digital ones in the work and education chapters, but for the sections on consumer products, the answer to the title - why analog matters - seems largely to be "because it's what cool (rich) people do". Obviously, there are differences between digital and analog. Obviously, there are pros and cons for each, and the human brain handles data from different sources... differently. If you're not going to delve into the science or psychology of this topic, and are instead trying to argue for analog as a way to increase one's social cachet, then at least engage with or even bother to identify that core premise. Sax's failure to do either made a nonstarter for me.

(The last chapter of this book, "The Revenge of Summer", centers around a tech-free summer camp that the author mentioned attending as a child. In 2017, the 7-week program costs nearly

. Such people may well attribute the comeback of, e.g., vinyl records, to factors like nostalgia and

having a physical collection, instead of *cough* unimportant factors like a.) physical space for storage, b.) money!!!, c.) leisure time to procure and play their finds, and d.) who has the capability to have A-C.)

Elena

The personality of the author (sensed through his comments) was close to unpleasant. I managed to go through about 1/2 of the book and returned my digital audio file back to the library as soon as i reached the spot where the author described how he returned shoes to a store in one year after wearing them... Somewhat interesting were chapters on board game renaissance and romantic experience of writing in moleskine notebooks. The reason i picked up the book in the first place was my surprise. Wh

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Margaret Sankey

Hilariously, despite several pointed statements in the work that this is better read in analog form, I read it because it was distributed to my Kindle as a galley review copy. I get it, I really do--there are tactile satisfactions to reading a well-produced book, and there is nothing like slamming a heavy landline phone, not to mention that digital music and books don't quite *belong* to you the way a physical object does. But Sax's narrative is then his exploration of the artisan and niche prod

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Keith

This is a fascinating examination of aspects and products that we tend to consider over and done with in the digital age. Turns out some things might have more longevity than we think. Author Sax divides his book into two main areas: Part I: The Revenge of Analog Things and Part II: The Revenge of Analog Ideas. The "revenge" aspect reflects that dismissive attitude these things and ideas experienced as digital took hold. For example, chapter 1 discusses an analog thing long

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Sax goes on to describe similar resurgences in manufacturing analog camera film, in the resurrection of the Moleskine notebook, of magazines, fountain pens and board games. The second half is not about things but about processes, instances where analog has crept into school and work, pushing out digital innovations. This second section beautifully illustrates how analog ideas can aid digital and also times when digital just gets in the way of creativity and communication. One example where analog has come back is the workplace, particularly the workplaces of high tech companies. Adobe teaches their interface designers how to meditate and how to sketch with paper and ink, Yelp provides non tech workspaces, Facebook has the Analog Research Laboratory where a completely analog letterpress is available.

The book is a stimulating read about these analog eruptions and although Sax makes it clear that all of these movements are minority events they are occupying serious niches. Sax reminded me of one particular aspect of my analog life, the Saturday morning visits to record and book stores, a search and a browse and all of it hands on, then home to admire, read, listen and place on shelves. That involvement is a big part of what's missing.

In a lovely epilogue Sax returns to the summer camp he attended as a teenager. The camp has a no-technology policy and although there are occasional violations the young people he interviews are mostly OK with a tech free summer camp (Interestingly, it's mostly the parents who want to stay in touch). Sax offers this concluding thought that admirably sums up many of the issues discussed in the book:

"No one, including myself, advocated a return to the predigital lives we once knew. No one was flinging their phones into lakes, or exclusively living off the grid. An entirely analog existence was unattainable and unattractive, but so was an exclusively digital one. What was ideal, and what lay behind the Revenge of Analog, was striking a balance between the two."

Kyle

Subject-wise, the book was intriguing.... but for some reason, the tone of the writing just didn't resonate with me. I felt that, if this book and I were at a party, and we were having a conversation, it would be one of those awkward conversations where I would feel like I'm being lectured to and I would have to feign interest and nod my head like I'm listening, but really I would be coming up with a way to get out of the conversation.

2.5/5