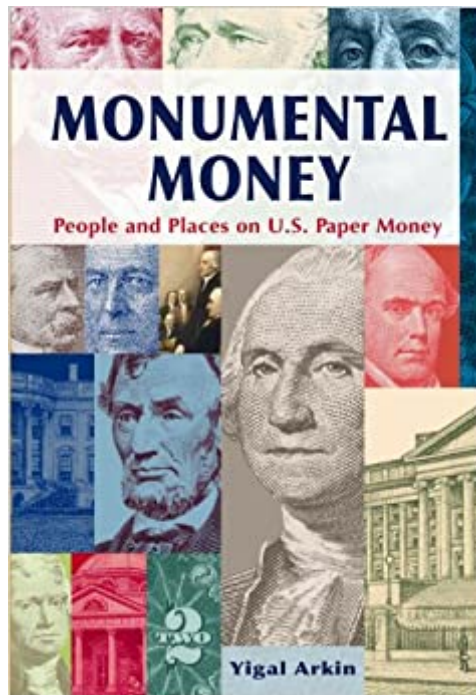




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Monumental Money: People And Places On U.S. Paper Money



Synopsis

Presenting U.S. currency used from the colonial period to the present day, this reference surveys the world of American banknotes and paper currency in three parts. Part one presents all the banknotes in circulation today, including those being slowly withdrawn as newer designs replace them, along with color photographs and a brief description of the people and sites depicted on each note. Part two provides a brief review of the history of the United States monetary system, covering the many different types of banknotes that have been used from the colonial period onward. Part three features the high-denomination banknotes no longer in circulation, including the \$100,000 note. This book is a nontechnical, accessible journey through a dimension of history often overlooked in its uniqueness and interest.

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Customer Reviews

Yigal Arkin is a longtime collector of world banknotes, specializing in Cuban, Palestinian, Israeli, and United States currency. He is the author of *The Currency of Israel*.

There is an old joke about a man who meets a dollar bill and says, "You're just a piece of paper." The dollar smiles and replies, "I may be just a piece of paper, but I've never seen a trash can in my life." Paper money is both worthless and priceless, but *Monumental Money* is about a two further aspects: It can be beautiful and it carries engraved history on every bill. Let me start with what this book is not. It is not a comprehensive reference book on US paper money aimed at notaphiliac numismatists. It is not a history book tracing US banking, public finance or engraving technology. It

is not an economics text on the theory of exchange media with no intrinsic worth. It is an affectionate and breezy guided tour of US paper money from colonial days to the present and beyond. There are high quality pictures of all the bills in circulation today, plus many older bills. It includes curiosities like fractional, rainbow, gold and high denomination notes (up to the \$100,000 bill). You will see the only US bill with a photograph, the first non-symbolic woman on US currency (Martha Washington) and confederate notes. There are capsule facts about the people who have been pictured on bills, discussion of some of the iconography and photographs of the actual monuments pictured on the bills. It adds up to a diverting and educational introduction to US paper money. If that's what you're looking for, I recommend this book.

Monumental Money stands as a fantastic introduction to the history of American paper currency. Not only does the book provide a good guide and photographic history of the changes made to the currency over the years, short histories and overviews of American monetary history throughout the years are concise and give just enough information for the reader to understand changes without becoming bogged down in policy or economics. The highlight of the book are the color depictions of each different series of bill presented, both those removed from circulation and those still in circulation for every denomination. Brief histories of the design of the bills, including biographies of the statesmen on the fronts and buildings and abstract designs on the reverses of the bills are a welcome addition to help understand how our currency has evolved. Each denomination follows the same formula for its description which makes for an easy reference, but no new revelations about any of the figures is provided (not that they're needed in a work such as this.) My only slight critique was the division of the text into three parts. Part One describes all the notes currently in circulation, Part Two provides a history of American paper currency from the Colonies to present, and Part Three describes all the high denomination notes (\$500 through \$100,000) in the same manner as Part One. Personally, I would have preferred to have Part Two's history first, and then a combination of Parts One and Three into one long list outlining the denominations from \$1 through \$100,000. This is a relatively minor critique, however, and does not come close to detracting from the value of Monumental Money as a fine introductory resource for monetary historians and collectors alike.

A very good introductory book about U.S. paper money is the recent release by Yigal Arkin. Titled, Monumental Money: People and Places on U.S. Paper Money, it takes a non-technical look at our country's currency in use from the British Colonial Period to the present day. Unlike U.S. standard

paper money books by Hessler or Friedberg, Monumental Money is not intended to be a catalog or guide in the traditional sense. There is no number system or prices given, nor is there a treatise on grading paper money. This is an ideal book for the neophyte or young collector who wants to easily learn the background of our nation's paper money. Taking advantage of Arkin's own profession in computer graphics and printing and having written previous numismatic books for banks, Monumental Money is liberally illustrated, combining good layout design and use of colors to a maximum advantage to give the reader a visibly pleasing end product. The book is divided in to three parts. Part 1 presents all the current notes in circulation (\$1 to \$100), including those designs being slowly withdrawn from circulation as newer designs replace them, including the newest 2011 \$100 note. It also includes excellent color images and a brief description of the people on the face, sites on the back depicted on each banknote, and even the facsimile signature of the person on the face of the note. After each denomination there is a "Did You Know?" list of several facts about the person that appears on that note. Part 2 presents a brief review of the history of the U.S. monetary system through the many types of banknotes in use from the time of the British Colonial Period from approximately 1690 to the present day. There are 13 color-coded categories, each with one or more color illustrations, both face and back, of the notes issued during these periods: Colonial Continental Currency, 1760-1788; Interest-Bearing Notes, 1812-1907; Demand Notes, 1861-1862; Confederate Currency, 1861-1865; Fractional Currency, 1863-1876; United State Notes - Legal Tender, 1862-1994; National Currency, 1863-1938; Gold Certificates, 1865-1936; Silver Certificates, 1878-1965; Treasury Notes - Coin Notes, 1890-1899; Federal Reserve Notes, 1914-present; Federal Reserve Bank Notes; 1915-1945; and Emergency Notes, World War II. Part 3 presents the high-denomination notes that are no longer in circulation, which most people possibly never knew existed. These denominations, although large by our standards wouldn't come even close to those used by the hyperinflation notes of some post-WWII European countries. These notes are the \$500, \$1,000, \$5,000, \$10,000, and \$100,000 issues. Monumental Money is a hardbound, 112-page book with index, approximately 7x10 inches filled with over 200 high-quality color illustration of notes, the people, and places related to the notes. It is reasonably priced at \$17.95

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