

not possess

jectories. Gift are precisely

not *objects* at all, but

sometimes

combined with, the

motive of self-interest, mo-

tives related to hostility, hate, or

precisely because identity is so

crucially involved. One po-

tential risk is that the

mocracy are not

produced in face-to-

face encounters any lon-

ger, while a new type of immedi-

than a quantitative nature. Soli-

or nature, instead of

both the recipi-

ent and the giver.

(Gift giving, a research an-

thology, p. 85) ///// Gifts have

One might think

of modern consump-

tion rituals, the ritual of try-

ing to outbid each other at auc-

together – are used as a cover for

economic transactions. The

things themselves do

ing ide ais that

favors have to be re-

ciprocated with equivalent

value : I will give you something,

ing or harming the recipient. Hos-

tility, Hate, Contempt Finally,

in addition to, or

ten overlooked

that solidarity is not

merely bonding but also

selective and excluding. (Social

that immediate reciprocity has di-

justice, war, and de-

debts to pay off

in the New Year. Al-

though gifts giving does

not account for all of the expens-

cerning ways of spending less on

gift, and of buying gifts that

have greater utility for

part of what gift

givers "get" for what

they give. (...) the reverse is

true in the case of many charita-

direct reciprocation is simply un-

realistic. However, the char-

itable donor may, in

goal is explicitly

to make it difficult or

impossible to give back the

equivalent : it is to put the other

rique) in which precious objects

continually circulate through

series of potlatches

other has ever

done, all of the forc-

es, all of the potentials

slumbering within the individual,

of total prestation and the pot-

plain two comple-

acterized by the

fact that in each case

the accent is placed on a

loss that must be as great as

productive social expendi-

tures such as festivals,

from individuals,

latch we must seek to ex-

because I expect that you will return contempt may inspire our gift giving.

minished to the extent that darity may change in quality

changed. (Social solidarity and *the gift*, pp. 20-21) //// In "authority ranking"...

recipient does not share the feelings we want to express in our gift. Our well-intentioned gift may cause disappointement, disapproval, my gift in due time or when necessary. (Social solidarity and the gift, pp. 46-49) irritation, or embarrassment in the re-Self-Interest A fifth class of motives is ///// One important effect of the gift is cipient. With our gift we may have forced ies, it appears that women are the greater givers, a finding that

transactions and

based on implicit or explicit self-interest, that it serves to recognize the value of ourselves too much upon the recipient. either taking the shape of promoting the recipient as a person. But gift giving (Social solidarity and the gift, p. 53) ///// one's own interests or by disadvantag- is at the same time a very risky activity, From both Caplow's and Cheal's studis corroborated by our

being in decline. (Social solidarity and *the gift*, p. 179) //// Values Influencing Christmas Gift Giving solidarity and the gift, pp. 142-143) //// ate, virtual reciprocity over the long : An Interpretive Study What values in-The globalization process creates new distance has come into being. (Social fluence the selection of gifts ? Are conpossibilities for solidarity but may also solidarity and the gift, p. 179) //// More- sumers aware of the influence of these result in new forms of inequality, thereby over, accounts of social decline always values? Which of these values endure putting new strains on solidarity. One carry the risk of ignoring other develop- over time? (Gift giving, a research anparadoxical effect of globalizazion is ments that are of a qualitative rather thology, p. 38) //// Method In November, 1990, we recruited fifteen informants to participate in two in-depth interdictable ways.

Third, gifts can symbolize social identities that have convential implications for es of Christmas, it is responsible for a four kinds of effects that assist in the how people behave toward one anothvery large portion of the cost. In hard creation and maintenance of social rela- er. And fourth, gifts can communicate times, costly gifts are likely to be seen as tionships. First, they can provide mate- inner states of the person, such as beone kind of needless extravagance that rial supports for social actors that stabi- liefs and feelings about other people. should be reduced. A variety of recom- lize their role performance. Second, gifts (*Gift giving, a research anthology*, p. 86) mendations are therefore made con- can creat normative obligations be- ///// In ancient societies, "businesspersons" acknowledged the role of giving gifts-sometimes as a introductory foot-in-

> ture of the gift itself may demonstrate familiarity with the recipient's tastes, the giver's per-

ing, a research anthology, p. 183) ///// A related point is that the motivations for that giving puts others under obliga-

tion without the need for violence. Gift-giving, we have give more than he has received. (The Enigma of the Gift, p. 150) ///// Societies

and for the dead. He can keep his authority in his tribe, village and family, and maintain his but which also eucourages people to but it implies two others equally imporposition with the chiefs inside and outmake their own way by using others. tant: the obligation to give presents and side his nation, only if he can prove that Our society lives and prospers only at the obligation to receive them. (The Gift, he is favourably regarded by the spirits, the cost of a permanent deficit of soli- pp. 10-11) //// "The three obligations : that he possesses fortune and that he is darity. (The Enigma of the Gift, p. 209) Giving, Receiving, Repaying". The obli- possessed by it. The only way to dem-///// To appreciate fully the institutions gation to give This is essence of pot- onstrate his fortune is by expending it o the humiliation of others, by putfor himself, his son, his son-in-law or daughter his name". (...) The

themselves for ends that cannot be subordinated to anything one can account for. It is only by possible in order for that activity to take mense travail of recklessness, dis- such insubordination-even if it is imits true meaning. (Visions of Excess, Se- charge, and upheaval that constitutes poverished-that the human race ceases lected Writings, 1927-1939, p. 118) //// life could be expressed by stating that to be isolated in the unconditionnal More or less narrowly, social rank is life starts only with the deficit of these splendor of material things. In fact, in linked to the possession of a fortune, systems; at least what it allows in the the most universal way, isolated or in engaged in processes of expenditure. Variations in form do not in any way alter

> nary because it is structured not so much around the real event (the homicide), nor around the

While the symbolic gift linked the giver and wired into the technological struc-

ics were advancing their careers by giving away the results

might be a performance. However. it should be recalled that in Our potlatch is non-tradi-

is functioning or disfunctioning. (L'information n'est pas gratuite) //// BIBLIOGRAPHY seding capitalism in cyberspace", http:// multitudes.samizdat.net/Cyber-Communism-how-the-Americans.html. may 2001. december 2006. //// Bey, Hakim, Radio Sermonettes, 1992,

The perception of other people's rel-

ative power is an important factor in the selection of persons whereas sops are good enough for those for those in lower

to the commu-

nity model, the au-

thority-ranking model also

promotes showing and exposing

Another illustration of authority

phenomenon of the

utes longer than

women to find the

right gift. Many anthropo-

logical studies about gift ex-

over women by demanding obe-

dience and ignoring wom-

en's concerns. When

cian culture, and

al. (Gift giving, a research

anthology, p. 39) //// However,

plain in detail each of these

five values. Instru-

to over \$1.5 bil-

lion annually attests

to the conclusion that busi-

ness believes in gift giving. (Gift

anthology, pp. 163-

egy cause the

social relationship

reinforced by the donation/

gift to be strained ? Conversely,

if they become keenly aware of

the fundraising strategy em-

ployed ? Another im-

an imaginary

beings (deities, na-

ture spirits, ancestors) be-

lieved to be endowed with pow-

and of raising themselves above

the rest. (...) These objects

must first of all be of

spirits, and ap-

parently does not re-

quire a return uncondition-

ally, especially when it is the work

to the complete disinterestedness

which one might expect.

These great acts of

practice we see

attempts to establish

new forms of relationships

between artist, work and viewer,

and the image stimulus, the ex-

change among people a

meaningless, repeat-

a vital part of the ritu-

and power is related to the

positions. In contrast own research. Our results show that small but consistent gender differences exist in the per-

er i twas bought or made at home, was about half an hour ; men take nine min-

views and two accompanied shopping trips prior to the Christmas holiday, and a brief ollow-up interview in January. (...) The the remaining values – tradition and resources while Christmasshopping."E Christmas season was chosen as it is edification – seem to be "mixed", in that quipollence". Equipollence is a specific easily the most complex gift-exchange they have both instrumental and termi- term meaning "equal in force, power, or occasion in North America. Moreover, nal elements. Moreover, as we will illus- validity – the same in effect or significawe incorporated accompanying con- trate, the effects of these two values on tion". (...) equipollence dictates that resumers on shopping trips into our re- the giver are different from their effects cipient evaluates the gift in a subset on the recipient. Below, we ex-

search design because Christmas shopping is such a pervasive activity in Amerthe-door, sometimes to ease into

controversial (or avoid confrontational) discussions, or Products Association International statistic that business gift giving today amounts

(birthdays, anniversaries, and so forth). (Gift giving, a research

and charitable donating may range from agonistic to altruistic. A charitable tential negative effects of leveraging charitable donations as gifts ? Can the stratwhich pratice gift-exchange and

both gift giving

potlatch have invested a great deal of ingenuity and re-(b) they must attest the presence within themselves of powers emanating from

obligation to re*ceive* This is no less constraining. One does not have the right to refuse a gift or a the essence of potlatch. Destruction is very often sacrificial, directed towards the the fundamental

characteristics of these processes, whose principle is loss. A certain excitation tend to become uniform, explicit and repetitive, within contemporary artistic

the receiver in a chain of reciprocity, if only metaphorical (parents donate their son's organs so that his fellows can be free of illness but at own organs so that himself is gratified in a museum that displays his stack the same time be eternally grateful, in imagining himself as a Great and he-pieces, for example, one is likely to enetc.), in the imaginary gift something is roic Self "giver", etc.). (II Dono, The Gift, counter the piece in a form of rolled-up interposed betwen the giver and the re- p. 407) //// Perhaps the most consistent sheets carried away by visitors. This ceiver ; there is the interpretation of a disruption is still effected by those (Felix simple, physical, escape from the mureflexive level by which the giver gives Gonzalez-Torres') pieces that invite the seum is strikingly effective in disrupting for the purpose of linking himself to his own ideal image (parents donate their



their own use, they incorporated these working methods inside the technologies of the Net. multiple copies of documents can eas- joyable ways of working together. At Above all, their invention depends upon ily be cached around the network. Al- the dawn of the new millennium, many the continual and unhindered reproduc- though most of its users are now from Americans are now experiencing the tion of information. When on-line, every outside the academy, the technical de-practical benefits of cyber-communism: connection involves copying material sign of the Net still assumes that all in- Commodity -> gift / enclosure -> disclofrom one computer to another. Once formation is a gift. (...) Even television sure / copyright -> piracy / fixed -> fluid the first copy of a piece of information is placed on the Net, the cost of making

ing a communi-

cations system for

theoretically all the place, will of course be put to explayers win-everyone gives & receives equaltra trouble & expense, so . There's no denying however that an ideal potlatch would be outcome adds a zest of randomness to the event. VIII. The host, who supplies se.html, december 2006. //// II dono.

Offerta, ospitalità, insidia. The Gift. Generous Offerings. Threatening Hospitality, Siena, Palazzo rier.ch. december 2006. //// Komterm. Aafke E., Social Solidarity and the Gift, Cambridge Uni-

versity Press, New

frankincense & myrrh, or even sexual acts. Some ground rules should be York, 2005. ///// "Modern Dav Robin Hood", http://news.bbc.co. uk/2/hi/americas/6164448.stm, november 2006, december 2006. ////

The University of Chicago Press, 1999.

///// Karie, Annie, "Free Newspa-

pers Blamed for Subway

Flooding", Special to

families or philanthropic trusts, and even when a museum acquires a work through the market, the effort is rarely fortablethinking of our favorite symbolic one (organ donation), but possible without funds from similar masterpieces as belonging to allof us around an imaginary event - the ty sources. Once an artwork passes from collectively, with the state merely in screenplay – which assimilated the real private into public hands, the institution's charge of protection and dissemination, fact of symbolic exchange; the fact that support of the artist who created the but we cannot achieve that idealized even today those responsible for child's work is split between a private mode state without the free play of capital and death have not been brought to justice (the quest to obtainn more work by the same artist) and a public one (intensified

provements, the same quantity of text on the Net is easily circulated, copied and remixed. (...)'Capital thus works towards its own others. Within a market economy, buy- developed computer-mediated comdissolution as the form dominating pro- ers and sellers tend to exchange com- munications to facilitate the distribution duction.' (Marx) (...) There are even self- modities of equivalent worth. Yet, within and manipulation of their own research ish reasons for adopting cyber-commu- the hi-tech gift economy, everyone re- data. Working at universities, they never nism. By adding their own presence, ceives far more from their fellow users conceived of this information as a comevery user is contributing something to than any individual could ever give modity. On the contrary, these academthe collective knowledge accessible to those already online. In return for this

home-made). The more elaborate gifts & leave with one the dishes the better. Ator more *different* gifts. This tempt to be *memorable*. (...) Percould be accomplished in a numhaps the banquet could have a theme ber of ways (...) V. The gifts must be gifts were supposed to be superb & (...) III. The banquet should be carried made by the players, not ready-made, even ruinous for the givers. In my opinout with a certain degree of formality: This is vital. Pre-manufactured elements ion physical objects are best. & they toasts, for example. (...) Live music at can go into the making of the gifts, but should be as good as possible-- not the banquet would be fine (...) (Record- each gift must be an individual work of necessarily costly to make, but really ed music is not appropriate.) IV. The art in its own right. (...) VI. Gifts need not impressive. Traditional potlatches inmain purpose of the potlatch is of be physical objects. One player's gift might be live music durcourse gift-giving. Every Dicplift Project player should arrive ing dinner, another's

free (...) We are convinced that information has a cost and that the biggest part of this cost has to be supported by the readers and not marked with a strong commercial con- Ault, Julie (editor), Felix Gonzalez-Torres, by advertising which should be a com- notation, trendy if not juvenile. It is to steidlangin publishers, New York and Göttinplement, sometimes necessary. This is newspapers what nuclear energy is to gen, 2006. ///// Barbrook, Richard , "Cybersimply because a newspaper has to free renewable energy sources : an illusion communism : how the Americans are super as much as possible from economic which leads to the belief that informapower. (...) If a free newspaper beat any tion is heaven-sent and that the few audience record, one could say it is because it meets a need. Could be. But let's

but only on the condition that the for- way of order and reserve has meaning groups, men fin themselves constantly tune be partially sacrificed in unonly from the moment when the ordered and reserved forces liberate and lose efforts to bring people into the museum to see them). (...) Ultimately, we may feel most con-

goods. (II Dono, The Gift, p. 355) ///// In others words, the gift has become imagi-

gift, each individual obtains potential access to all the information provided on the Net by away. (...) From the beginning. these gift relations of production were hard-

with one or more

consider the

type of news passed

on by free free newspa-

pers. Sanitized, very short,

minutes spent by the tilting train

user are enough to under-

stand how the world

CC

has faded into the background.

ture of the Net. Although funded by the military, scientists

of their labour. Creat-

the Amerindian potlatches the volved prestige-winning. (...) VII.

tional, however, in that 0-0

http://www.hermetic. com/bey/radio_

ble donations. For instance, when one their donations. (Gift giving, a research ception of the recipient, or the giver's donates clothing or money to humani- anthology, p. 182) //// Mauss noted that self-perception. While a typical birthday tarian relief effort in a improverished na- in archaic forms of gift exchange, gifts present or Christmas gift might we tion, there is little expectation that the showed honor and respect to the recipi- communicate the messages suggested donor can count on the recipients to ent. Scholars of contemporary gift ex- above, it is difficult to imagine a typical help out in turn should the need arise; change note that the relative cost of charitable donation doing so. (Gift giv-and return-potlastingly in debt, to make him lose face not move, which remain within the clan seen, creates an interdependence bepublicly, thus affirming for as long as where the the gods are said to have de- tween the two partners and at the same

possible one's own superiority. (The posited them. (The Enigma of the Gift, p. time puts one (the recipient) under an Enigma of the Gift, p. 56) //// Finally, the 61) //// But why, in this type of society, obligation to the other (the donor), inworld Mauss describes is a magical or does the exchange of gifts and counter- stalls him in a socially inferior and deenchanted world (he uses the word fée- gifts become the privileged instrument pendent position until he can in turn of the *struggle* for power and fame ? The first reason, it seems to me. lies in the fact

mentary factors.

Total prestation not

only carries with it the obli-

gation to repay gifts received,

latch, A chief must give a potlatch

spectacles, and

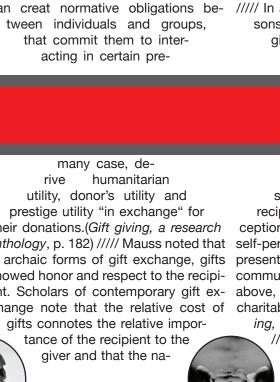
games. (Visions of

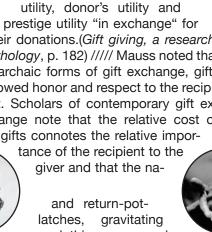
1927-1939, p. 123) ///// The im-

Excess, Selected Writings,

aiver and that the nalatches, gravitating around things more valu-

gifts connotes the relative importance of the recipient to the able still, sacred things which do





potlatch. The potlatch is a ceremony of competitive gift giving and the collective destruction with whom one decides to transact. valulable objects, in addition to ex- of wealth in order to acquire personal Power, fame, prestige, and merit are re- changing items or giving such items to status and prestige. The ceremonial ilgarded as the most relevant criteria other people. Examples are conspicu- lustrates how abundant and excessive within social relationship. Transactions ous consumption, exhibition of prestige gift giving puts the recipient in a position over valuable things are conducted with items, or symbols of rank and status. of almost impossible indebteness. those high in the power hierarchy, (Social solidarity and the gift, p. 23) //// Mauss describes how the North American Indians went so far as to destroy their wealth publicy instead of giving it women do not, or barely, take part in

gift exchange, this may be a manifestation of their subordicentages of women and men who re- change seem to confirm the model of nate role in certain society. But also port having given presents, food, stay, "asymetrical reciprocity in favor of men" ehen women do have a substantial share and care or help to others; as to the : men are the dominant parties in gift in gift giving, as in our society, this may amount of money gifts, women and men giving, and prevailing patterns of gift ex- be interpreted as a sign of their subordido not differ. The average time spent in change benefit men more than women; nation. (Social solidarity and the gift, pp. devising and choosing a present, whet- men are reported to assert dominance 81-87) ///// In sociology solidarity has primarily been conceived as an inherently positive concept. (...) However, solidari-

> mental Values "Frugality". The value of frugality refers to giver's desires to maximize their financial (primarily the giver's children) be treated in an egalitarian manner by the giver.

ness gifts have the ability to express a symbolic message to recipients. They sometimes to soften up tough trade *giving, a research anthology*, p. 163) say the donor understands its customnegotiators. While purportedly to show //// Business gifts are frequently given ers' needs, and is willing to expend the appreciation or otherwise honor a distin- upon contractual agreements, although resources to please them. They say the guished colleague, in most cases ther like personal gifts, they may also be dononr is part of a personal company motivation to build future business rela- timed to coincide with holidays or dates (...), who appreciates the business, and tionships was primary. The Promotional of recipients' personal significance welcomes the customer to contact the company officier in a position to service supportive and loyal customers. They say

164) ///// Busi-

portant question concerns the circumstances under which the strategy of personalizing the dodonation may be made purely for pur- is the charity put at risk if the social re- nor/recipient relationship will work. Do poses of self-aggrandizement : alterna- lationship upon which it relies become those who make charitable donations ly, it may be made selflessly and with strained or break down altogether? Are really want more intimate connection the deepest concern for the well-being some types of social relationships more to those who benefit from the donations of the recipient. (Gift giving, a research useful thant others for fundraisers? Will? Or do they rely upon the social disanthology, p. 190) //// (...) are there po- donors perceive charities as exploitative tance between themselves and the recipients of their charity to preserve their sens of safety and security in their

no pratical use or unusable in the daily activities of living and earning a livelihood. (...) The secfinement in selecting and inventing ob- ers of life and death over persons and ond characteristic of these objects is jects which seemed to them capable of things; (c) they must lend themselves to their abstraction. (...) The third characbeing both vehicles and the symbols of comparision with each other so that, by teristic of these objects is their beauty power. But in every canse, these objects their quantities and/or their qualities, as it is defined in the cultural and symmust fulfill several functions : (a) they they provide their owners with the means bolic universe of the societies that make must be substitutes for real persons; of measuring themselves against others use of them. (...) Ultimately the most valuable objects are unique and, given that their value increases with the num-

generosity are not free from self-interest. The extravagant consumption of wealth, particupotlatch. To do so show fear of having of a superior clan chief or of the chief of larlyin the potlatch, always exaggeratto repay, and of being abased in default. a clan already recognized as superior. ed and often purely destructive, in which One would "lose the weight" of one's But normally the potlatch must be re- goods long stored are all at once given name by admitting defeat in advance. turned with interest like all other gifts. or destroyed, lends to these institutions ...) The obligation to repay Outside pure (The Gift, pp. 37-40) ///// Even the de- the appearances of wasteful expendidestruction the obligation to repay is struction of wealth does not correspond ture and child-like prodigality. Not only are valuable goods thrown away and foodstuffs consumed to excess but there is

able and predictable transaction, it becomes ever more attractive to think of the work of art tion, whose sum total is maintained at which in our opinion can be read with as gift. (II Dono, The Gift, p. 29) ///// a noticeably constant level, animates more perspicacity through reference to The artist who give is suspect. He has collectivities and individuals. (Visions of the notion of gift : new ties, new bonds, declared too much. And what should he Excess, Selected Writings, 1927-1939, new forms of generosity and seduction, give ? (...) What if certain artists seem to o. 128) ///// While current forms of inter- new snares. In a context in which the "impoverish" themselves, wearing their personal interaction and communica- gaze tends to become consumption nakedness to offer it to the gaze or the pleasure of others. Yoko Ono lets the audience take away her clothing, cut to pieces

challenge the

fundamental muse-

creativity'. (...)

son's organs so that he can live again, um mission of pristine idealized, in mass-edia fiction ; an individual donates his preservation. Before setting foot viewer to take the work away with the official aura and reestablishthem. The stack pieces and

ing connections to a broadthe candy pieces er and more inclusive each extra copy becomes almost Quite spontaneously. zero. The architecture of the system presupposes that

the users of the Net are adopting more efficient and en-/ product -> process / proprietary and film-making will soon be transformed by the possi--> open source / digital -> encryption free downbilities of 'interactive

agreed on. No mediation should be involved in the gift-- no videotapes, tape recordings, that a dull or stingy player will lose part of a series in which each player printed material, etc. All gifts should be prestige, while an imaginative &/or gen- takes a turn as host. (...) IX.Gifts should present at the potlatch "ceremony"-erous player will gain "face." In a really not be "useful." They should appeal to e. no tickets to other events, no promsuccessful potlatch each player will be the senses. Some groups may prefer ises, no postponements. Remember equally generous, so that all pl ayers will works of art, others might like home- that the purpose of the game, as well as be equally pleased. The uncertainty of made preserves & relishes, or gold its most basic rule, is to avoid all mediation & even representation- to be "present," to give "presents." (Radio Ser-

York. October 26, 2006 ///// Mauss, Marcel, The Gift, Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies, Translated by lan delle Papesse, Centro Arte Contemporanea, Otnes, Cele, Richard F. Beltramini (editors), Cunnison, Norton and Company, New York, 2 June-23 september, 2001, Edizioni Charta, Gift giving, A Research Anthology, Bowling 1967. ///// Richardson, Michael (editor), Milano, 2001. //// Jacomy, Séverine, Marco Green State University Popular Press, Bowl- Georges Bataille- Essential Writings, SAGE Gregory, "L'information n'est pas gratuite", ing Green, 1996. //// Godelier, Maurice, The Publications, London, 1998. //// Stoekl, Al-Le Courrier, Genève, 17 Septembre 2005. Enigma of the Gift, first published as L'énigme lan (editor), Georges Bataille, Visions of Ex-Free translation. Online : http://www.lecour- du don, Libraire Arthème Fayard, Paris, 1996, cess, Selected Writings, 1927-1939, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1986. //// "What is copyleft ?", http://www.fsf.org/licens-

ing/essays/copyleft.

the Sun, New

one's riches as a sign of ultimate superiority and power. Apart from the more caricatural examples in our own culture – solidarity and the gift, p. 28) ///// Pro- within the confines of the market modthe swimming pool filled with cham- fessional relationship are based on a el. (Social solidarity and the gift, p. 30) pagne, the bank manager lighting his market model : services are offered in ///// Both personal and social identities cigar with a thousand dollar note – ex- exchange for money. When an employer have their impact on the mutual expeccessive gift giving as a sign of power os gives a standard Christmas packet to tations that arise through gift giving. For

away – wasting

ty. Our interviews that many examples of gifts that too many, too ciety. Our interviews revealed ty is not predominantly or exclusively the warm and friendly category we usually assume it to be. Various types of risks participation in gift exchange is taking of course, Christmas, Valentine's Day, may be involved in group solidarity (...) part in social networks, circles of friends anniversaries, births, wedding ceremoconflicting interests internal to the group, or family members who meet each other nies, jubilees, and the like.(Social solior strong emotional reactions to losses on a more or less regular basis. Many darity and the gift, p. 137) //// Solidarity

(...) Ingroup solidarity may also result in concrete inimical behavior toward out-

For example,

some givers are con-

cerned with the sheer num-

from a variety of cul-

prosperous and suc-

cessful, generous, and fair

priced, and ready to go above

consumer researchers' purposes

are best served by defining

charity as gift giving.

the donor

pensive, placing the recipient in a position of undesired dependency. (Social also a common practice in Western so- his employees, this is not merely an ex- instance, social identities like age and pression of his gratitude for performed services but also an attempt to strenghten

large, or too ex-

(Social solidarity and the gift, pp. 133-134) ///// An important precondition to that could result due to the uncoopera- gifts are given during informal meetings clearly has a selective character : people tive behavior of other group members between friends (sometimes colleagues) seem to choose – probably mostly not or while having dinner or drinks together. (...) Other very important occasions of

group members.

motives to give this gift remain gender often determine the type of gift that is given... Thanks to the enormous variand the second gift giving are the many rituals still surviving in our socieety.

the employees'

commitment to the

company. The employer's

Highlights of ritual gift giving are, in a conscious way – those social partners in their gift relationships who are "attrac-

tures. (..) And while the value of tradition has been articulated as guiding activities such as the ber of gifts that are given, others are more concerned with the ammount presence of Christmas trees in the fam- cation through gift giving include racial of money spent on the gifts, and a few ily, our text reveals ot clearly guides stereotypes, age discrimination, gender givers strive to gifts of equal signifi- many gift selection behaviors as well. roles, and career choices. Terminal Valcance. Mixed (Instrumental/Terminal) "Edification". The concept of edification ues "Social Recognition". Within the Values "Tradition". Many authors have revolves around instruction or improve- particular context of gift giving, social noted that the present celebration of ment, especially in moral, social, or in- recognition could be defined as gaining Christmas in America is the result tellectual matters. Thus, this value of an amalgam of traditions results in the giver attempting to teach a recipi-We do believe that there are some activities amenable to the

label "charitable donating" that and beyond normal business relation- are well described by certain theories donating, would be furthered if we reships to ensure long-term customers. of gift giving, and that fundraisers rec- gard charitable donating and gift giving They bolster the donor company's repu- ognize that charitable donating may be as disinct phenomena. (Gift giving, a retation for its customer service orienta- usefully repositioned as a form of gift search anthology, p. 175) //// We begin tion. (Gift giving, a research anthology, p. giving. We argue, however, that much of to challenge the classification of chari-170) //// (...) we will question whether what is typically regarded as charitable table donating as a type of gift giving if donating is so dissimilar as to require a distinctive theoritical perspective. We be-

points, or encourage particular activities. Some of the issues that underlies edifirespect and esteem for one's choice of gifts. (Gift giving, a research anthology,

ent certain view-

lieve that both our theoritical understanding, and such pratical interests as promoting charitable we question whether social relationships and giving occasions can be identified

small worlds ? (Gift giving, a research anthology, pp. 191-192) ///// Gift purchases representasignificant portion of consumption to make others indebted to themselves. completely detached from the giver. activities in North American cultures (i. But the essential problem remains, The thing has been given without really \$97 billion per year, approximately namely why is the debt created by a gift being "alienated" by the giver. The thin \$1000 per U.S. household, American not cancelled or erased by an identical given therefore takes with it something Demographics, 1993.) (Gift giving, a re- counter-gift? The answer may be hard of the person, of the identity of the giver. search anthology, p. 195) //// Here we to understand for a mind immersed in Moreover, the giver retains some rights are at the heart of cultural worlds in which all of the kin aroups that make up the sober and the importance of the

persons having owned them for a time, they no longer need to be beautiful; they merely have drains were partially responsible for the tribute to flooding, he said. "We have to be old. (The Enigma of the Gift, pp. crippling subway flood of September 8. complained bitterly for a long time about 161-163) //// Free Newspapers Blamed 2004, which affected 15 subway lines, the free newspapers. We must stop the for Subway Flooding. Free newspapers according to the task forces' findings.(...) distribution of free newspapers on our distributed to subway commuters are a "Hand-distributed free newspapers have property, or require these papers to be najor cause of subway track flooding, a been and will continue to be a major kept in bins where they cannot end up Metropolitan Transportation Authority investigative task force has found. Left-

destruction for

its own sake-cop-

pers are thrown into the

sea or broken. But the motives of

henchmen, the hierarchy is estab-

lished by means of these

gifts. (The Gift, p. 72)

with scissors

utilized in turns by

people who seem to be

gathering fetishes or relics of the

response. Thre true gift is asym-

metric : it is not the begin-

ning of a relationship.

cietv are compelled, in order to continue to exist, both to become indebted to others and the logic of today's commercial relations, but it is basically it. (...) The logic of gift-ex-simple. If the counter- change is entirely

over stacks of papers such as AM New York and Metro that blew onto the tracks and clogged cause of clogging the drains," (...) His biggest complaint concerned the stacks of

erase the debt, it is because the "thing" given has not really been separated, over the thing after having given

gift does not

extra newspapers left behind after the morning rush, which add fuel to track fires and conon the subway tracks," Mr. Feinstein said. AM New York has a daily circulation

///// Bataille was of a generation that in general felt betrayed by Western civilisation and he was such excessive gifts and reckless con- repelled by the values of capitalist so- produce. (George Bataille Essential sumption, such mad losses and destruc- ciety. What he particularly despised was writings, p. 61) //// Pleasure, wheter art, tion of wealth, especially in these pot- the focus on capital accumulation and permissible debauchery, or play, is delatch societies, are in no way the fact that in capitalism people were finitively reduced, in the intellectual repdisinterested. Between vassals and encouraged to save for the future rather resentations in circulation, to a conceschiefs, between vassals and their than to live fullly in the present. (...) To sion; in other words it is reduced to a make an effort to accumulate was therefore against our fundamental nature. The

(II Dono, The Gift, p. 59) ///// The fact that, according to the famous Hegelian image, the "bud performance. Ana Mendieta is naked dissents in flowering" and "the fruit gift is this opening to form, the occurlike the skeleton she tries to animate in a takes the place of the flower as its truth" rence and the continuity of a process sort of vivifying embrace. Marina does not negate its giving itself as bud, that translates itself and vanishes in its Abamovic's tries to withstand the instru- flower and fruit, but makes of these fig- representations. (II Dono, The Gift, p. 71) ments of pleasure or torture that visitors ures "moments of organic unity" and ///// Contrary to the notions of Mauss employ on her willing body. There is no each "constitutes the life of the whole." and Lévy-Strauss, the giving impulse in What seems to be a gift, for Adorno, is the conciliating element of these mo-

real problem facing us should be to learn how to spend and to lose the surplus we naturally diversion whose role is subsidiary. The most appreciable share in life is given as the

ments and, therefore, their very "giving themselves form" in the movement of being. The modern capitalism is no less prevalent and important... than in a primitive

context. Visitors to the museum are confronted with the sight of others not only touching the art, but actually taking it away with the world. "Yet each piece of paper sponsibility, however, and Gonzalezthem. A personal, tactile, intimacy – and gathers new meaning", he said, "from its Torres knew well that in giving a gift he ownership – is counterposed to the cus- final destination, which depends on the was also placing a charge on the recipitodial authority of the institution. "An in-person who takes it." The very ephem-ent, an implicit obligation to respond to dividual piece of paper from one of the erality of these works can be subject to it in an appropriate way. All gifts have stacks does not constitue the "piece" unpredictable reversal. (...) If his works this double-edged quality, imposing a itself". Gonzalez-Torres explained. "but in fact it is a piece."

load / original -> recording latest remix / scarcity -> abundance / alienation -> friendship / market competition -> network com- share the program and their improve- ect, our aim is to give all users the freemunities / e-commerce -> cyber-com- ments, if they are so minded. But it also dom to redistribute and change GNU munism (Cyber-communism) //// What allows uncooperative people to convert software. If middlemen could strip off s Copyleft? Copyleft is a general meth- the program into proprietary software. the freedom, we might have many usod for making a program or other work They can make changes, many or few, ers, but those users would not have free, and requiring all modified and ex- and distribute the result as a proprietary freedom. So instead of putting GNU tended versions of the program to be free as well. The simplest way to make a pro-

are and are not "pieces" leave the institution and begin their own unpredicatable circulation in continue to circulate as gifts as well as resting institutional

tranquility, that is ap-

gram free software is to put it in the public domain, uncopyrighted. This allows people to product. People who receive the program in that modified form do not have the

But they'll most

likely make the sale,

and the CD known only as

propriate, because Felix Gonzalez-Torres was a constant gift-giver. (...) In gifts begin redebt at the same time as they en-rich the receiver. (...) "I need the viewer; I need a freedom that the original author gave them; the middleman has

stripped it away. In the GNU projsoftware in the public domain, we "copyleft" it. Copyleft says that anyone who re-

and they will walk out. Why do this? Surely the artists know they won't get any MONEY where around us. Then we cut it all up and rearrange it to make new art, social

logo 22. New York free newspapers 23. Yoko Ono, Wish Tree, 1997 24. Alfredo Jaar. The Gift. 1998 25. Claude Closky, Pièces jaunes, 1998 26. Creative commons logo 35. "Give blood" logo 36. Copyleft logo 37. Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Un-

titled (Aparición),

monette) ///// What is the Droplift *Project?* The idea came suddenly.Manufacture our own CDs, go into chain stores, and leave go home with yet another customer. from this puzzling act. Ah, but perhaps them in the appropriate bins. Down Mission accomplished. On the weekend you are starting to understand already. among the established pop hits and top of July 28th, 2000, all across the United The artists on THE DROPLIFT PROJECT 40 product, these CDs await those curi- States and Internationally, ordinary citi- make and find recordings of the stuff we ous few who take them to the counter. zens will walk into record stores with all hear on radio, TV, in the news, on Then what? Witness the confused faces copies of THE DROPLIFT PROJECT other CDs and tapes, and from everyof cashiers and customers alike

up in the inventory. html, december 2006. ///// "What is the Droplift Project?", http:// www.droplift.org/pressrelease. html, december 2006. PICTURES (from top left to bottom right) : 1. Potlatch figure Christmas" coin 12. Holiday sales 13. Free Litter 27. Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Untitled welcoming quests 2. Christmas wrapping meals in Algeria 14. Santiago Sierra, Bread (Ross), 1991 28. Yoko Ono, Cut Piece, 1965 paper 3. Marina Abramovic, Rythm 0, 1974 cube, 2003 15. Athenian Love gift Calyx krat- 29. Chrismas ball to colour in 30. Linux logo tributed. Circa 1910 5. Corporation gift 6. itv 17. Paul Dubois. La Charité. 19th century Carsten Höller. Kinderfalle (Killing Children de sensibilité picturale non-matérielle. to Claude Pascal, in the presence of Jean Larcade, lle

de la Cité, Paris,

THE DROPLIFT PROJECT will hidden on their person. They will when the CD does not show proceed to leave them, well 82510 filed, in the stacks, 1962 7. Real Money wrapping paper 8. The Salvation Army, Lassie

9. Catholic charity in Africa 10. Christmas trees to cut out 11. "Merry 4. Men posing with potlatch gifts to be dis- er, Aegisthos painter, ca 460 BCE 16. Char- 31. "Das Piktogramm für Gift", Germany 32 Yves Klein, Transfert d'une zone d'une zone 18. Gabriel Orozco, My hands are my heart III), 1994, Detail 33. Peer2Peer scheme 34. #2, 1991 19. The salvation Army, Christmas action 20. Lee Mingwei, Money for art, 1994 21. Blood donation

These fragments that

ety of possible gifts, we are able to chosse exactly that gift we think will cause the recipient the important, our emotional involvement with this particular

person, including his

tive" to them, because they can expect them to give in return at some time. The rule of reciprocity tends to disadvantage those the socially weak – who participates Reciprocal solidarity acts as a principle who are already in the weakest social less than others in circles of gift ex- of exclusion in these cases. These inposition. (Social solidarity and the gift, p. changes are less likely to receive help herent failures of solidarity are an impor-138) ///// (...) more and more money is and care from others than do people tant reason why the governement can spent on charity. (...) Although in the who form part of these networks : the not rely too much on informal care withcommon conception of solidarity posi- "Matthew effect". Moreover, informal out risking social inequality and exclutive connotations prevail, it is not necessarily a positive concept (...) our own

or her idiosyncrasies and shortcomings. This gift confirms

the identity and self-esteem of tives expresses friendship, love, related to psychological expectagratitude, respect, loyalty, 134

or solidarity. (...) Inse-

reasearch on gift giving demonstrates some inherent failures of solidarity. Those people - often care and help are characterized

by the restrictions of "pilanthropic particularism",

curity A second anda gain very com-

mon class of motives relates to insecurity – for instance, greatest pleasure. A gift thus demon- the recipient. (Social solidarity and the about the status of the relationship. (...) strates our recognition, acceptance, and gift, p. 44) //// What psychological mo- Power and Prestige Gifts may also be estimation of the recipient. In our gift, tivations are involved in gift giving ? In inspired by a need for power and presparticularly chosen for this person, we what follows, an attempt is made to cat- tige or by considerations related to repshow not only our investement in terms egorize motives. (...) Positive Feeling A utation and fame. (...) Reciprocity, Equalof money and time but also, and more first and most common category of mo- *ity* A fourth large category of motives is tions of reciprocity and equality. The underly-

a preference to care for family and

relatives more than for other people who might require care. sion. (...) In public and political debates on social cohesion and solidarity it is of-

pp. 40-51) ///// Characteristics of the Perfect Gift What are the critical symbolic properties of the perfect gift that might symbolize agapic the recipient, their relationship, and the more than in the gift itself. The gift is love ? (...) 1. The giver makes an extraor- ritual prestation, by "perfect gift" I really only a symbolic vehicle through which ent is surprised by the gift. 6. The

dis delighted by it.

for typical acts of charity. Condier the case of an individual donating cash to a homeless person as he or she walks to work, or cussion give some credence to the usually defined as a voluntary act withwriting out a check in support of Am- typical acts of charity – which benefit out expectation of compensation, it is nesty International. The donor and the others whom the donor does not know still possible to talk about gifts being exrecipient in this case do not have a so- personnally and which occur upon oc- changed in an economic sense since cial relationship (family, friend, acquain- casions determined by the request of the expectation of reciprocity is institutance) such as commonly exists be- the recipient, the whim of the donor, or tionalized for a majority of gift-giving tween a gift giver and recipient. Moreover, it is unlikely that this kind of giving oc-

Since not all of these characteristics inhere in the gift itself, and many depends upon the giver,

dinary sacrifice. 2. Te giver wishes solely mean perfect gift giving and gift receiv- gift giver and recipient interact. (Gift givto please the recipient. 3. The gift is lux- ing. (Gift giving, a research anthology, p. ing, a research anthology, p. 68) ///// ury. 4. The gift is something uniquely ap- 61) ///// If the perfect gift is marked by One of the problems identified by finanpropriate to the recipient. 5. The recipi- sacrifice, altruism, luxury, appropriat- cial advisors is the annual credit card ness, surprise, and delight, the binge during the Christmas searecipient desires the gift an _____ imperfect gift is any gift that _____ son, which leaves many lacks one or more of

curs upon a rec-

ognized giving occasion or that a ceremonial prestation ritual occurs. This disother factors such as tax incentives that are salient at fiscal year end – are dis-

istics. Failures in the perfect gift occur on the part of gift givers and receivers

these character-

people with large similar to typical

gift giving. (Gift giving, a research anthology p. 181) //// (...) while gift giving is occasions. The "utility" of being able to expect return gifts from others is (...) a

separate (...) from the logic of commercial exchange. (The Enigma of the Gift, pp. 42and all. It is not only "moral" reasons that command to not

dispersed or surren-

of 325,000 and Metro has a daily circulation of 300,000. (Free Newspapers Blamed for Subwav Flooding) ///// The giving of gifts has idealized, the "uncalculating" gift oper- looks set for a comeback. But charity become above all a subjective, persona ates in the imaginary as the last refuge is not the Promised Land. (...) We live in and individual matter. It is the expres- of a solidarity, of an open-handedness a society which, by every way it funcsion and the instrument of personal rela- which is supposed to have character- tions, separates individuals from each tionships located beyond the spheres of ized other eras in the evolution of hu- other, isolates them within their own the market and the state. (...) In our cul- mankind. Gift-giving becomes the bear- family, and affords them advancement ture, gift-giving thus continues to partake of an ethic and a logic which are not

der – without replacing – realities which are presented and experienced as *necessary* to the 4) //// Religion is certainly not the ul- reproduction of one and all. This ne- In potlatch, one gives in order to "flattion of its alienation. (The Enigma of the Gift, p. 45) ///// The rules of potlatch seem rules of potlatch seem

those of the market and of profit, which are even opposed to them and resist them. (...) When er of a utopia (a utopia which can be projected into the past

as well as into the fu-

to oppose term for term the principles animating the gift-ex-

changes we have just analyzed. imate explanation for the obligation un- cessity can be material or mental, but in ten" the other. To do this, one gives more er which individuals and groups have any case it is social. The effect of reli- than (one thinks) the other can repay of placed themselves to not surrender – or gion is not th endow common property one repays much more than the other at least not completely - certain "things" with an inalienable character, but to im- has given. As in non-agonistic exchangnecessary to the reproduction of one pose a sacred character on the prohibi- es of gifts and countergifts, the potlatch-gift creates a debt and an obligation for the receiver, but in the case the

ture). (The Enigma of the Gift, pp. 207-208) ///// The institu-

tions of charitable giving thus only by opposing them to one another. We live in a society which liberates, as no

condition _ sometimes even as the regrettable condition -

of productive social activity. (Visions of Excess, Selected Writings, is therefore a question simply of the yond themselves. Now it is necessary production and conservation and con- so-called unproductive expenditures : of consumption that serves as a means servation, and consumption must be di- luxury, mourning, war, cults, the con- to the end of production. Even though it vided into two distinct parts. The first, struction of sumptuary monuments, is always possible to set the various reductible part is represented by the use of the minimum necessary for the

tribe. The unending offering of entrepreneurs, investing

jobs, accumulating inventories – all long before any return is received, all in a profound ambivalence that ap- ously two things, a proposition of alliwithout any assurance that the entre- pears in the very vocabulary of the gift. ance or friendship, but equally that by prise will not fail - constitute a pattern of In a well-known article, Marcel Mauss which one takes or seizes power. This giving that dwarfs in extent and in es- had observed that the word "don" is ambivalence can be found in the double sential generosity any primitive rite of designated in ancient Germanic lan- meaning of the French word obligé, exchange. Giving is the vital impusle guages by the word "Gift" (still used in which also exists in Portuguese. The and moral center of capitalism. (II Dono, The Gift, p. 217) ///// The multi-dimension-

conservation of life and the continuation of indiviuals' productive activity in a given society ; it

games, spectacles, arts, perverse sexual activity (i. e., deflected from genital finali-ality of social

action allowing for an understanding of the paradigm of the gift, manifests itself English) which has an extremely disturbing double meaning

since gift/gift means

which, at least in primitive circumstances, have no end be-

ty) – all these

represent activities

1927-1939, p. 117) //// Human activity fundamental condition of productive ac- to reserve the use of the word expendis not entirely reductible to processes of tivity. The second part is represented by ture for the designation of all the modes forms of expenditure in opposition to each other, they constitute a group char-

both the gift that please, at least in theory, and poison, that

which kills. The gift is simultanegift obliges. (II Dono, The Gift, p. 261) ///// Art museum holdings tend to be gifts

public for that work to exist. Without the viewer, without the

public, this work has no meaning it's just another fucking boring sculp- ed availability. (Felix Gonzalez-Torres, ure sitting on the floor, and that is not pp. 81-84) //// 'Gift cultures are adapta- tion of information has become slowly hat this work is about." (...) Gonzalez- tions not to scarcity but to abundance. easier through a long process of mechaforres embraced excess, but not waste. They arise in populations that do not nisation. A manually-operated press e was never tempted by the peasure of have significant material-scarcity prob- produced copies which were relatively destruction for its own sake, and his lems with survival goods.' (Raymond) expensive, limited in numbers and imgenerosity was not that of the potlatch, in which gifts are given only to be im-

distributes the software, with or

without changes, must pass along the freedom to further copy and change it. (copyleft) //// pushed and pulled at each other to mined (...) II. The basic structure is a Three Britons dressed as Robin Hood grab the free cash. The men who called banquet or picnic. Each player must and his Merry Men caused a small stam- themselves the Modern Day Robin bring a dish or bottle, etc., of sufficient pede in a park in New York after throw- Hoods, threw the \$4,000, made up of quantity that everyone gets at least a ing \$4,000 (£2,110) into the air. The \$1, \$5,\$10 and \$20 notes, into the air, serving. Dishes can be prepared or finpranksters—from Sheffield in Eng- sparking the frenzy. Even children were ished on the spot, but nothing should land-said they hoped their stunt would encourage New Yorkers to be more polite

mediately destroyed. Instead, he was committed to the idea of unlimited production, unlimit-The gift economy of the Net

emerges from the technological and social adand "give something back". However, the plan reportedly back-fired after passers-by

reportedly stepped on, although

no-one was seriously hurt. (Modern Day Robin

modernisation. Over the last three hundred years, the reproduction, distribution and manipulapossible to alter without recopy-

vances cata-

lysed by capitalist

ing. After generations of technological

Hood) ///// An Immediatist Potlatch I. Any number can play but the number must be pre-deter-

be bought ready-made (except wine & beer, although these could ideally be

commentary. parody, and contemporary criticism. It's noth-

ing new. Artists have been makour works outright, wishing to avoid unpleasant harassment lawsuits. CD

2. (1)] 1991 38. Open source logo 39. Modern Day Robin Hood 40. "The Chicago ravioli project". The Chicago Ravioli Project is a guerrilla public art intervention. Organized by Temporary a small art collective he started in 1997, Services and Tasty Productions, the project make the art. 43. Francesco Finizio, Déaims to integrate art and creative materials sodorisant, 1998 44. Clegg and Guttman, hroughout the city of Chicago and into the The Open-Air Library, 1991 45. Halloween

life of any passer-by.They're out there. drawing 46. Gift certificate 47. Cildo Meire-They're free. Now, who's going to notice les, Zero Dollar, 1974-1978 48. Joseph Kothem? 41. "The droplift project" 42. suth, *The Gift*, 1990 ("What you are re-Chad Hopper's box. Chad Hopper has been putting boxes of art and tovs up

Plants. acting on an RIAA mandate to curb piracy, are skittish about pressing material that

way we find ourselves in the awkward position of acting in a way that is seen by

for grabs around town at various locations like Wheatsville and Waterloo since 2001. Chad and his posse of friends who comprise Palfloat.

garding as a gift is a problem for you to solve, Wittgenstein"/ "For this work

some as criminal. So here it is! Listen to it! We're not doing

this for our health. This is a delibng collages for the last hundred years. might contain recognizable samples. erate attempt not only for our talents to he world of Fine Art has long recog- Even free music venues on the Internet be heard, but to encourage some disnized the artist's right to use found ob- refuse to allow sample-based works. Is cussion about artists' use of sound jects in a new context to make a com- it illegal? Depends on who you ask. (...) samples in their work. If you like the ment. The world of music has been a Our only recourse was to manufacture disc, spread the word! Write an article. little behind. Record companies reject and distribute a disc on our own. In this play it on your radio show, make tapes for friends, and help us get it out there! (What is Droplift Proiect ?) ///// News is not

to be actualized it must become a gift, therefore it will be donated to an Italian museum as part of this

exhibition)" (at the bottom of the work)//

////////copyleft,