



For-Giving A Feminist Criticism of Exchange

by **Genevieve Vaughan**

Foreword by Robin Morgan

ISBN: 0-911051-94-5

Library of Congress Number: 97-065354

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Quote from Karl Marx on page 21 is from *The German Ideology*, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Moscow Progress Publishers, 1964, p. 41.

The quote from "La Folie Perceval" is from *The Search for the Grail*, Dr. Graham Phillips, Arrow, London, 1996. Cover art "The Visible Hand" and line drawing illustrations for the book are by Liliana Wilson.

Computer graphics by Genevieve Vaughan with the assistance of Liliana Wilson.

Printed in the United States of America

I dedicate the book to the Earth, who is Mother, Daughter, Friend and Beloved, so that all humans may find a way to love her (and each other) more. I dedicate it also to the ancient image of women's power, the Egyptian goddess Sekhmet, that we may clearly and fiercely protect mothering ways and, free from addictions and misconceptions, give birth to a better society.

"Language is as old as consciousness, language is practical consciousness that exists also for other men [sic] and for that reason alone it really exists personally for me as well. . .
." Karl Marx

"Whom does the Grail serve?" La Folie Perceval, 1330 A.D.

Foreword

by Robin Morgan

The book you hold in your hands is a gift--from author to reader, from an individual woman to the Women's Movement (and to men of conscience) everywhere. In a sense, every work of authentic feminist theory might be said to fit that category. But what Genevieve Vaughan has given us is something unique--a work as impassioned in feeling as it is thoughtful in analysis, one in which scrupulous research and scholarship resonate in synchrony with, not opposition to, the finest impulses of the human heart.

Such a Both/And insistence--to challenge the mind and simultaneously warm the spirit--is not easy in an Either/Or world. It requires a healthy audacity even to attempt both at once. Gen Vaughan correctly notes how feminists are already daring to consider "every academic system suspect," and she goes further, urging us to risk regaining our "naiveté," to dare question everything. But make no mistake. By naiveté, she doesn't mean sentimentality or blurry-minded romanticism, although she does refreshingly let altruism out of the closet and into the streets. I find her "naive" theories highly sophisticated in the best sense: intelligently worked through, ethical, pragmatic, feasible cross-culturally, and as applicable in intimate relationships as in global politics. In other words, effectively transformative.

Different readers will discover different gifts here. Semioticians, linguists, economists, and political scientists will encounter a radical feminist intellectual challenge rare in their rarefied fields. But one needn't know anything about semiotics or other academic disciplines to appreciate this book.

Activists will find an accessible political analysis as applicable to money as to masculation, to anorexia, armaments, or architecture--a theory with implications for closed systems and cosmic ones.

Male readers will find a theory that doesn't blame men simplistically yet doesn't flinch to dissect patriarchy and insist on individual moral responsibility as well as on systemic change.

In general, thoughtful readers as weary of pedantic fads as of popu-babble clichés will find in these pages an approach that cheerfully unsettles many such concepts, including deconstructionism, postmodernism, charity, and codependence (to name only a few).

For me, a language-loving poet, there's real pleasure in Gen Vaughan's wit and wordplay (which should delight Mary Daly aficionados). There are constructs here-- "constrained reciprocity" for instance--that will, I predict, become verbal-watershed phrases comparable to "reproductive rights," "acquaintance rape," or Adrienne Rich's memorable "compulsory heterosexuality." As a feminist, I revel in the "consciousness clicks" throughout this book--so many that some gems are blithely tossed off in footnotes. As an internationalist, I'm deeply grateful for Vaughan's cross-cultural sensitivity that draws examples from all over the world. As a fiction writer, I enjoy her creative appraisal of fairy tales, myths, archetypes, and stereotypes. As a political theorist, I admire her courage in reclaiming "values" from the right wing. As someone interested in metaphysics, I'm fascinated by the implications of the Gift Paradigm--from the latest left-and-right-brain research to alternative views of existence itself. And as a political activist, I appreciate and admire the way in which Gen Vaughan's life is an example of her theory in practice; in fact, she has been so busy for so many years supporting and participating in global feminist energy that it's been difficult to get her to sit down long enough to finish this book.

Her work can now find its audience, and I wish for it a large one. Because this book will not only make you think, but will coax you toward hope, offering a reminder of the human capacity for transformation. And that will make you oddly happy--even surrounded, as you are, by the intensely ungenerous, lethally exploitative spirit of patriarchy. This will offer a third way, in defiance of status quo thinking that posits bifurcated untenable alternatives--selfishness and selflessness, for instance. That possibility, in turn, will give you a sense of your own power--not power over, but power to. If you've ever been a mother, you'll recognize that power: of giving--whether birth, or nurturance, or time, care, attention. If you've ever been in love, you'll recognize that power: of exhilaration, of abundance, of joyous outpouring (Juliet's "the more I give to thee, the more I have, for both are infinite"), the celebration of miraculous dailiness.

However you open yourself to this book, you'll encounter a wiser possible self--and society. The transformation of both is up to all of us. These pages are part of a map-in-progress for the journey; this book is one tool for the task.

A gift indeed.

Robin Morgan

Thanks

I thank Susan Bright for her understanding and illuminated editing which have made the reader's burden lighter and mine as well.

I thank Liliana Wilson for her beautiful artwork and her spirit, her readiness to give her time and creativity.

My greatest gratitude goes to Robin Morgan who over many years has given me encouragement from her disinterested feminist revolutionary heart and has read and commented on various versions of the manuscript numerous times.

I especially thank my daughters, Amelia, Beatrice, and Emma Rossi-Landi who have continued to listen to me, and have encouraged and supported me over the many years I have been working on this book.

I thank my brother Ben Vaughan who has given me much material support and, without at all knowing my ideas on the subject, provides a wonderful example of a nurturing father for his and my sister-in-law's sons.

I thank my parents and grandparents who provided me with the resources of exchange that I could use for giving.

I thank all the women of the Foundation for a Compassionate Society and Feminists for a Compassionate Society who have had to tolerate me while I worked on the book, for their sisterhood and support. I am grateful also for their commitment to peace for all through women's values, and their inspired feminist leadership. I am grateful to San Juanita Alcala, Yana Bland, Rose Corrales, Patricia Cuney, Barbara Franco, Sally Jacques, Suze Kemper, Maria Limon, Sue MacNichol, Aina Olomo, Erin Rogers, Angeles Romero, Susan Lee Solar, Frieda Werden, Debbie Winegarten, and Ruthe Winegarten for proof reading and for their suggestions and reviews of the manuscript. Several people read and commented on earlier versions of the book, including Letitia Blalock, Florence Howe, Kam Magor and Doll Mathis, for which I thank them. I thank Margaret Nunley for giving me plenty of free time to write. I am especially grateful to Plain View Press for their feminist commitment and innovative organization. Margo La Gattuta valiantly managed the huge job of technical editing, for which I thank her. I also thank Terry Sherrell of Morgan Printing for her expert corrections. I appreciate all people who are trying to bring about a better world through the gifts of time, money, ideas, imagination, good will, and hard work, which make a paradigm shift possible. I especially appreciate and thank the reader for opening your mind to this book and using its contents. Without your attention, the gift would remain ungiven.

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I have been very fortunate in the things my life has brought me to do. For example, in 1963 I married an Italian philosophy professor and moved to Italy where I was able to participate in a number of intellectual currents. In 1964 a group of professors in Bologna who wanted to start a new philosophical journal asked my husband to help them apply Marx's analysis of the commodity and money to language. The problem and the way they stated it were fascinating to me. I began to think about it then, and in fact have never stopped. Although the journal did not happen after all, my ex-husband did write about the relations between language and exchange. I did not agree with him but it took many years before I was able to understand why. Finally in 1975-76 I stayed for a couple of years in

the United States, and was able to devote myself to thinking the problem through. In 1977-78 I wrote a couple of academic essays which were published in the early 80s. They are cited in the bibliography, and I invite readers who are academically inclined to read them. I was able to go into some issues more thoroughly than I have in this book. For instance, in "Saussure and Vigotsky via Marx" I discuss Saussure's concept of linguistic value regarding the analogy he makes with exchange, correcting for the differences Marx would see in his idea of exchange value. In "Communication and Exchange" I introduce the idea of communicative need, identify exchange as Doll Mathis, for which I thank them. I thank Margaret Nunley for giving me plenty of free time to write. I am especially grateful to Plain View Press for their feminist commitment and innovative organization. Margo La Gattuta valiantly managed the huge job of technical editing, for which I thank her. I also thank Terry Sherrell of Morgan Printing for her expert corrections. I appreciate all people who are trying to bring about a better world through the gifts of time, money, ideas, imagination, good will, and hard work, which make a paradigm shift possible. I especially appreciate and thank the reader for opening your mind to this book and using its contents. Without your attention, the gift would remain ungiven.

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There was a lot of interesting philosophical discussion going on in the Italian feminist movement at the time. I participated in some courses at the Virginia Woolf Cultural Center, an independent women's university in Rome started by feminist philosopher Alessandra Bochetti. It was during that time that I began to realize that women's free labor in the home was the great unseen element that could be the basis of a new philosophy. I had been doing a lot of giftgiving in my own life, both bringing up my daughters and as a wife. I began to see that my values and those of most women differed from the values and priorities of most of the men I had met whether academics or bureaucrats, laborers or activists. It occurred to me that women's free labor could be understood as the economic base for an alternative superstructure, a system of ideas and values different from prevailing patriarchal ideas and values.

In 1983 I came back to the U.S. to try to put giftgiving values into practice in contexts outside the home. The last chapter of this book discusses that attempt, which is still ongoing. This practice, which was somewhat specific to my personal situation, did not leave much time for theoretical work (giftgiving can be very time consuming, which is what happens also in mothering). I was involved in many women's organizations and discussed the idea of the 'gift economy' with everyone, trying to normalize it. One of the people I discussed it with was Sonia Johnson, who used it (citing me) in her book *Wildfire*. I think her treatment was caught in the contradictions between ego and other and could not lead to the kind of social change for all that I think is necessary. I think I finally began working on the present book in about 1988, though certainly not full time, and without the advantages and disadvantages of academia. It became very long and then short again. The file in my computer under which this version is kept is 'short book.' I have tried to integrate most of the ideas into the text and footnotes, but many had to be left aside.

During the time in which I was living in Italy, we felt the wind blowing from France where many thinkers were dealing with issues of communication, economics, semiotics and psychoanalysis. The school of Jacques Lacan had broken new ground, and anthropologists like Claude Levi-Strauss and Maurice Godelier had broadened the investigations started by Marcel Mauss and Emile Durkheim. Georges Bataille, Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida investigated language, culture, and the unconscious. For me the most interesting of all of these thinkers was Jean Joseph Goux, whose application of Marx's analysis of the commodity and money to various social structures led in directions which were different from mine (among other reasons, because my reading of Marx was different). The feminist thinkers Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva had a difficult patriarchal context in which to operate and sometimes came to Italy to find support among the Italian women philosophers. The Semiotics Summer Institute in Urbino was a place of fine intellectual ferment where many of the French and Italian semioticians and (at the time) ante-postmodernists as well as a few from the U.S. and Eastern Europe gathered to present their theories to the faithful. I heard Jean Baudrillard and Jean-Francois Lyotard there as well as Umberto Eco, Massimo Bonfantini, Augusto Ponzio, Luis Prieto, my ex-husband Ferruccio Rossi-Landi and many others. I wrote a paper on nurturing and communication for the last Summer Institute I attended, but since I neglected to go through the bureaucratic channels to get on the list I presented it only to

a small group who got together for the purpose. I also belonged to the Centro Romano di Semiotica and attended many presentations by local and international speakers.

When I moved back to the U.S. in 1983 I encountered Lewis Hyde's book *The Gift, Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property*. While it was heartening to see giftgiving described with honor I thought that the lack of a theory of language as giftgiving limited the scope of the book to literary criticism (which anyway lingered too long on Ezra Pound's anti-Semitic ravings). I had already read Malinowsky's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* in college and later Marcel Mauss's *Essay on the Gift*. I read in these books about the potlatch practiced by the Native American tribes of the Pacific Northwest, and since then I have discussed these 'give aways' not only with anthropologists but with the people for whom they are a living traditional economic way. Then books like Jean Baker Miller's *Toward a New Psychology of Women*, Nancy Chodorow's *The Reproduction of Mothering*, Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice* and later Sara Ruddick's *Maternal Thinking* showed me how women in the U.S. were dealing with their difference from patriarchy. Already in Italy there had been a wide movement among feminists dealing with sexual difference in a positive way.

The postmodern criticism of 'phallogocentrism' brings up many important issues. However, I believe that the recognition of the fundamental importance of giftgiving can be the antidote to phallogocentrism on the reality plane (with important repercussions on the psychological and verbal planes). I hope also that my use of the model of Vigotsky's experiment in concept formation can clarify how patriarchy comes to be, how men are 'logofied' and women are 'reified.' The advantage of Vigotsky's model is that it presents concept formation as a dynamic process with stages and is not a static picture of similarities and differences. It transfers to the plane of cognitive psychology an issue that has been important for philosophy from Aristotle's one-many problem to Derrida's questions about exemplarity. I look at this problem as a symptom of centuries of patriarchal mis-conceptions.

Vigotsky believed that children were able only to form concepts at puberty. If the concept structure riddles society, as I propose, it alters the context into which children of both genders are born, making it hard for children to understand their own cognitive processes, at least until they are acting them out at another level at puberty. This consideration brings me to a theory of knowledge that I will just mention, which I call 'Nel blu dipinto di blu' ('In the blue, painted blue') from the song 'Volare' by Domenico Modugno. I believe that when we are doing something in our own lives we are more likely to see similar things in the world around us. For example, it was during the rise of 'survival of the fittest' capitalism that 'survival of the fittest' evolutionary theory developed. By this I do not mean to imply that what is seen is not 'true' but only that it might not have been seen at all if people had not been acting in a similar way at a different level. Perhaps it is because men have been embodying the one-many relation in their lives and projecting it into society that it has been important in philosophy. Vigotsky would have been no more exempt from this than anyone else. Moreover, for various reasons connected with the practice of exchange, which I discuss in this book, we are also not recognizing the giftgiving many of us are already doing. I hope that this book will allow women and men

not only to practice more giftgiving but to see that they are already doing a great deal of it, to recognize that they are already 'painted blue' and to see the blue of the sky that surrounds them.

I believe that much of the anti-authoritarianism of both women and men can be understood as an appropriate anti-patriarchal attitude. The desire to place heart over head or emotion above reason is a kind of translation of the need to put the gift paradigm above the exchange paradigm. We should do this not just for sentimental reasons (which also have to do with giftgiving) but for practical reasons having to do with the survival of life on the planet. I have written For-Giving in order to understand patriarchy so that we--women and men--can make the deep and far reaching changes that are necessary.

As I was writing the book at a certain point I was wondering whether I would be accused of penis envy and a castrating attitude. As the Goddess would have it, however, just at that moment I received a call from a friend in Germany about the women in former Yugoslavia, and a call from a friend here who is the child of a rape and who was working on that issue. Eighteen thousand babies from the rapes in Bosnia, they said, many of them abandoned. What horror stories. After I hung up and began to write again, I wept and screamed in sorrow, frustration and rage. They said that the men had sometimes been forced to rape to continue in the army. Mothers were raped and killed in front of their daughters, who were also raped. Babies were cut out of their mothers' wombs and dog fetuses put in their place. We could say this is only former Yugoslavia and put it in a context that doesn't belong to the U.S. But I have heard many similar stories from around the world. And in 1991 when the U.S. began the war against Iraq we received information that men in U.S. marine bootcamps sang the refrain: "rape the women, kill the children, it's the only thing to do...." I am sorry, my brothers. Those of you who would desert and risk death to avoid this--perhaps it does not apply to you. I hope for all our sakes it does not. But do you realize how much pain and unspeakable horror this 'high' of yours or of theirs is causing? Let the men who read this learn to give by giving me the leeway to go ahead and try to tell it like it is. If you discount me you are enabling that behavior. And the same to you mothers who want to protect your sons from a blow to their self-esteem. Protect your sons not from me, from the truth, but from the society which turns them into ghouls and vampires, their instrument of love into an instrument of hate. Protect them from the phallic images and resonators that radiate validation to them from the society at large, that cause you to think that I am being 'unrealistic,' and that let you allow them to go ahead and join the army or become arms manufacturers or exploitative capitalists. All rapists and torturers had mothers. What can I say? That I am sorry that I see this clearly? I am sorry for us all. But if we see it we can stop it. Anything we can do to change the situation is worth consideration. Please read this book knowing that is its intention.

Apology

I ask for-giveness for the long time it has taken me to bring these ideas to light. I tried to do it sooner but did not succeed.

I ask for-giveness also for the many inadequacies and inaccuracies that may be found in this book. In my defense I can only offer the consideration that once you stop taking the purveyors of the dominant paradigm seriously, it is hard to remember exactly what they say.

I ask for-giveness of friends who may be surprised at my ideas. A paradigm hangs together and needs to be explained all at once. Though I have expressed my opinions I have often found a lack of comprehension because the wider context of the opinions was invisible. For that reason I did not always try to expose my point of view (though I did try to practice it).

If my anti-patriarchal analysis makes you uncomfortable, dear reader, I want to make it clear that I believe all life is sacred and miraculous--and that means your life too. The problem is a logic and a system, a self-confirming paradigm of dominance, and a dominant paradigm; it is not the individual male or female person. Listen to William Blake's explanation from the poem 'London' in Songs of Experience:

In every cry of every Man,

In every Infants cry of fear,

In every voice: in every ban,

The mind forg'd manacles I hear.

I believe the manacles to be forged not just in the mind but, through a feedback loop, on the material plane also. Perhaps we cannot break the manacles because that would require the violence that confirms patriarchal domination. However, we can unlock them. In this book I try to find a key so small it fits into the mind. Please use it.

"Language is as old as consciousness, language is practical consciousness that exists also for other men [sic] and for that reason alone it really exists personally for me as well. . . ."
---Karl Marx

"Whom does the Grail serve?" La Folie Perceval, 1330 A.D.

Chapter 1

Where to Start

Capitalism and communism are both patriarchal. The philosophy of social change which is wider and deeper than either of them is feminism. I believe that feminism is a

collective philosophy, a body of thought and action based on the values of women worldwide, which is presently revealing itself to the consciousness of all. Patriarchy has infected women and men for centuries, distorting our view of the world and warping our socio-economic practices. The agenda of feminism is to liberate everyone--women, children and men--from patriarchy without destroying the human beings who are its carriers and the planet where they live.

Trying to think outside of patriarchy puts women in a situation similar to that of the ancient pre-Socratic philosophers who were thinking at the beginning of Western patriarchal culture. If we reject the patterns of thought that have riddled and plagued European culture, there is a great deal of untrodden ground before us. We need to reconnect with our innocence, with the hearts that have not made war, that have moved us to take care of children and old people in spite of great difficulties rather than abuse them. We need to reject the patriarchal world view and start over--naively looking through our own eyes.

When we stop believing what we have been told, we find that the truth is there but our ability to recognize it has been numbed and buried deep within by the strata of the history of individuals, of cultures and of the species. It is the re-awakened, collectively-formulated women's perspective that proves the human species was not Mother Nature's mistake. By adopting it, women, and the men who follow them, can reverse the destruction of human beings and the planet.

In order to reject patriarchal thinking, we must be able to distinguish between it and something else, an alternative.

The disciplines of academia have a tendency to mushroom into worlds to which thousands of international researchers and thinkers contribute. In spite of many 'advances,' they validate a view of the world and a reality in which the perpetration of abuse and domination is endemic at many levels. I believe that there is a relatively simple fatal flaw which undermines all so-called 'First World' thinking, including the thinking of the academic worlds. We usually begin our investigations into different subjects downstream from this flaw and, therefore, we are already under its influence. The naive point of view allows us to begin at the beginning. Usually academics build upon the past and begin at a place so far down the course of the river that the flaw can no longer be identified. Indeed, it seems to constitute reality. It is at the beginning that we can hope to find the alternative.

Because of the circumstances of my life, I have been able to turn my own naive attention towards one area of academic concern which has been particularly important in the Twentieth Century: the study of language and other sign systems. Whatever their other achievements, the disciplines of linguistics and semiotics and the philosophy of language have brought forward the fundamental importance of language for the human character and condition. If language is important, it follows that the study of language--in the disciplines of linguistics and semiotics--is a good place to begin an investigation of patriarchal thinking.

Communication by means of language is now considered by academics to be a separate and independent rule-governed activity. Some linguists believe that the fact that all human communities use language is evidence that language is transmitted, for the most part, not culturally but genetically. Syntactic rules and sometimes even elements of vocabulary appear to be part of the hardware handed down from generation to generation. It seems to me that such genetic endowments would predetermine our linguistic behavior in a "Biology is destiny" sort of way. In this, language would appear similar to gender, the characteristics of which were for centuries culturally considered to be biologically transmitted and, therefore, unchangeable and unchallengeable, especially by the 'genetically inferior' gender.

Making language a gift given by our DNA, not a cultural inheritance, locates it in an area which is beyond human intervention. If we believe instead that language is a social endowment which must be learned by flexible young mind-body complexes in the making, our idea of the human character varies accordingly. What is learned can be subjected to collective revision; its mechanisms can be investigated by the learners; its consequences altered.

Strange as they seem to me, considerations such as the genetic transmission of language are taken seriously and have far-reaching ripple-effects for other disciplines. An environment is created in which some ideas fit together and thrive because they are validated as permissible and respectable, while their alternatives are discredited. The so-called 'free market' of ideas, like the economic free market, often promotes the benefit of a (genetically superior?) few while appearing to be good for everyone.

Whenever we are talking about the human condition, we should subject our own discourse to at least two tests: "What's in it for me materially?" and secondly, "What's in it for me psychologically?" Criticism of ideology has shown that whole systems of thought have served the dominance of some groups over others. Every academic discipline should be suspect. Systems of ideas which we have been taught as the truth back up the political and economic systems of which they are a part.

Fortunately, I have been outside the academic world and not dependent upon it for my material well-being. Thus, I have been able to remain naive. I desire radical social change; as a mother, I want my children and the children of all mothers to receive a healthy and sane future, free from the collective psychosis of patriarchy. Contributing effectively to this future is my psychological reward.

I hope to show that there is a feminist explanation for language, and that much of our thinking can be re-framed as deriving from a woman-based practice. There is an entirely different paradigm which exists and is accessible beneath the abstractions of linguistics and semiotics. Feminists who have been rightly distressed by the male dominance of language have sometimes chosen to speak and write poetically as an alternative. They have even sometimes chosen to remain silent in order to subtract themselves from patriarchal discourse. I suggest that, by finding and consciously embracing the hidden

paradigm, we can begin to liberate both language and social practice from patriarchal control.

In spite of endless discussions, philosophers have not been able to answer the question, "How are words 'hooked on' to the world?" This question is the end of a thread which is bound up in the tangle of patriarchal philosophy--a good place to begin a naive investigation. All the answers that have been given to this question have been influenced by the patriarchal stances of the mostly male philosophers who were doing the thinking. Their points of view grew up in denial of a women's model and have served to support patriarchal hierarchies throughout the centuries. I do not want to try to refute current or past theories of language one by one, which would make this book an endless academic undertaking, conducted on the territory of those I want to challenge. I will simply propose an alternative theory.

Let me identify some questions that need to be answered. We need to know how words, phrases, discourses 'mean.' How are they related to each other and to the world? What is the significance of language for the nature of human beings as individuals and as a species? Why is it important for us to know this? Since language has been considered to play an important role in making us human, answering these questions in terms of an abstract system causes us to attribute our humanity to our capacity for abstract thought, with the consequence that those of us who are best at abstract thinking appear to be somehow more human than the others.

Women have been stereotypically assigned the province of 'emotion' while men have appropriated the area of 'reason.' If we see language as an abstract system having the capacity to make us human, men's 'superiority' would seem to be justified by their presumed capacity for abstraction. Theories of language back up theories, or at least popular conceptions, of gender.

At another level of complication, considering syntax as a collection of rules imputes the rule-governed character to the human being as well. Thus it validates our systems of laws, making them seem natural because they are also collections of rules and require rule-governed activity. What happens in academia regarding language can have far reaching effects on the rest of the world. Academic economic theories also have important effects on the way goods are produced and distributed everywhere. Even when the effects are not direct, the assumptions underlying these disciplines influence individual and group behavior in many areas of life.

Changing the basic assumptions would have a far-reaching ripple effect. They form the motivation and backup rationale for policies and behaviors in much the same way that the existence of the military industrial complex forms the motivation and backup for US foreign policy.

Co-creation of Patriarchy

It has become commonplace in the US New Age movement to talk about the co-creation of 'reality.' It is said that, by our thoughts, we cause certain things to occur and others not to occur. I hope to be able to show how we are collectively creating a patriarchal reality, which is actually bio-pathic (harmful to life), and I propose that we dismantle that reality. Our values, and the self-fulfilling interpretations of life that we make because of them, are creating a harmful illusion which leads us to act and to organize society in harmful ways. This is one sense in which our thoughts do make things happen. If we understand what we are doing, however, patriarchal reality can be changed. First, we must have the courage to change the basic assumptions which serve as fail-safes to keep deep systemic changes from occurring.

Although male domination exists in many (or perhaps most) cultures, it is towards the domination of the white male that I want to direct my attention. In fact, I believe that many patterns of domination and submission have come together to create a pattern of domination for that group at all levels. By this, I do not mean that every white male dominates, or that only white males dominate, but that the patterns of sex, race, and class fit together effectively to allow and encourage white males to dominate in many different areas of life. The patterns of domination propagate themselves and the values upon which they are based.

In the history of Europe, the rise of capitalism and technology, the slaughter of the witches, the invasion of the Americas and genocide of indigenous peoples, the slavery of Africans, and the Nazi holocaust are all extreme moments of a culture in which sex, race, and class work together like a giant mechanism to over-privilege some and under-privilege many others. Unfortunately, this mechanism often sets the standard and validates similar behavior in other cultures. Dictators throughout the world climb the stairs erected before them by their European brothers, perpetrating horrors.

At present, white males are still the most successful purveyors of patriarchy. Through mechanisms such as the free market, they continue to dominate the global economy. It is therefore the responsibility of their caregivers, especially white women, together with white women's allies among women and men of color and white men, to turn against patriarchy and dismantle it from within. We must all cease rewarding bio-pathic behaviors and systems. Women and men must stop nurturing patriarchy.

Capitalism has had advantages for many women, especially white women, in that it has allowed us to take on the structural position which had formerly been reserved for men. Becoming part of the work force and becoming educated for positions of authority have allowed many women to acquire the voice--the ability to speak out and to define situations--which is very difficult for women who only have access to traditional family roles where males have all the authority.

Many women are using their freedom to speak against the system which 'liberated' them regarding its many defects, which weigh upon them personally through low wages, lack of child care, and the continued privileging of males. They also condemn the system's exploitation of their sisters and their sisters' children in the so-called 'Third World' here

and abroad, its enormous waste of resources through the arms business and war, and its endemic devastation of the environment.

I think that all women in capitalism are in a particularly good position to see through its apparent advantages, because we are still being educated to bring up children at the same time that we are being encouraged to climb the economic ladder. The contradictions involved in the values which accompany these two mandates draw our attention to the deep contradictions in the system itself.

Therapies and drugs of various kinds tend to try to make us 'adjust' by concentrating on ourselves as the cause of our discomfort. However, many feminists are turning outwards, against the bio-pathic system. We are not using the violent methods of the system but are looking for other ways to change it from within.

I believe we have not yet succeeded because we do not realize that we have a common perspective and that the problems we are facing are systemic. By showing the links among different aspects of patriarchy, and by uncovering and asserting our common alternative values, women can begin to dismantle patriarchy, to re-create reality and to lead everyone back from the brink of disaster to peace for all.

The Gift Paradigm

There is a fundamental paradigm, with widespread and far reaching effects, which is not being noticed. It may seem strange, in the time of space travel, computers and genetic engineering, that anything really important could be ignored. However, we may remember the idea of the "elephant in the living room" talked about by Alcoholics Anonymous. People who are in denial of someone's alcoholism do not mention it. In order to maintain the status quo, they turn their attention to other things.

I believe there is a large part of life that is being denied and ignored. Unlike alcoholism, it is the healthy normal way of being, but we are indeed turning our attention away from it in order to maintain a false reality, the patriarchal status quo. I call this unseen part of life 'the gift paradigm.' It is a way of constructing and interpreting reality that derives from mothering and is therefore woman-based (at least as long as women are the ones who are doing most of the mothering).

The gift paradigm emphasizes the importance of giving to satisfy needs. It is need-oriented rather than profit-oriented. Free giftgiving to needs--what in mothering we would call nurturing or caring work--is often not counted and may remain invisible in our society or seem uninformative because it is qualitatively rather than quantitatively based. However, giving to needs creates bonds between givers and receivers. Recognizing someone's need, and acting to satisfy it, convinces the giver of the existence of the other, while receiving something from someone else that satisfies a need proves the existence of the other to the receiver.

Needs change and are modified by the ways they are satisfied, tastes develop, new needs arise. As they grow, children need to become independent, and mothers can also satisfy that need by refraining from satisfying some of the children's other needs.

Opposed to giftgiving is exchange, which is giving in order to receive. Here calculation and measurement are necessary, and an equation must be established between the products.

In exchange there is a logical movement which is ego-oriented rather than other-oriented. The giver uses the satisfaction of the other's need as a means to the satisfaction of her own need. Ironically, what we call 'economics' is based on exchange, while giftgiving is relegated to the home--though the word 'economics' itself originally meant 'care of the household.' In capitalism, the exchange paradigm reigns unquestioned and is the mainstay of patriarchal reality.

Even many of those who wish to challenge capitalism envision only an economy without money--a barter economy--which is of course still based on exchange. I believe they misplace the dividing line between the paradigms, making money the responsible factor rather than exchange, so they cannot clearly see the alternative that giftgiving presents. Aiding the maintenance of the status quo and the exchange economy is a view of 'human nature' as egotistical and competitive qualities which are required and enhanced by capitalism. The qualities required and enhanced by mothering are other-orientation, kindness and creativity. Though they are necessary for bringing up young children, these qualities are made difficult, even self-sacrificial, by the scarcity for the many which is often the consequence of the exchange economy. They are considered not 'human nature,' not part of reality.

I believe that the gift paradigm is present everywhere in our lives, though we have become used to not seeing it. Exchange, with its requirement for measurement, is much more visible. However, even our greeting "How are you?" is a way of asking "What are your needs?" 'Co-muni-cation' is giving gifts (from the Latin munus--gift) together. It is how we form the 'co-muni-ty.'

By satisfying the needs of the infants who are dependent upon them, mothers actually form the bodies of the people who are, and live together in, the community. They also care for and maintain the implements, houses and locations where the community interactions take place. We communicate with each other through our gifts of goods, through co-munication. Each gift carries with it something of the thought process and values of the giver and affirms the value of the receiver. In fact, goods and services that are given freely to satisfy needs give value to the receiver by implication.²

Exchange

Exchange, on the other hand, is self-reflecting. It requires attention to be concentrated on equivalence between the products, and the value that might have been given to the other person instead returns to the giver in the satisfaction of her own need. In exchange, the

satisfaction of the need of the other is only a means to the satisfaction of one's own need. When everyone is doing this, the co-munication that occurs is altered and only succeeds in creating a group of isolated, unbonded, independent egos, not a co-munity.

In their isolation, these egos tend to develop new artificial needs for nurturing and bonding and use domination to procure for themselves the sense of community and identity they lack, forcing others to nurture them. They use everything from personal violence to manipulation of abstract systems to achieve the satisfaction of their needs, satisfaction which they are no longer receiving from participating directly in gift interactions.

In fact, we might look at our society as starving for free gifts and the bonds that are created by them. Our compassion is blocked, and it appears that only by denying giving-and-receiving can we survive. Yet not giving is killing those who could give just as surely as not receiving is killing those who have the material needs. In order to maintain this aberrant situation, laws have been established, and armed forces are paid to back them up.

Huge amounts of money are spent nurturing the justice system, the government, the police and the military, thereby creating the scarcity which makes giftgiving difficult, and exchange a necessary survival mechanism.³ Abstract systems of laws and hierarchical organizations like the government and the military are delivery systems for gifts, taking them away from the needs of the many in the community and directing them towards the needs of special groups of exchangers who have been socialized with an ego hungry to have 'more.'

While we may be grateful to the exchangers (entrepreneurs) for creating jobs, we should realize that the jobs are ways of getting for the entrepreneur what Karl Marx called 'surplus value'--what we could call a free gift of labor time given by the worker. In order to survive, the worker also has to receive many free gifts from his or her nurturers. Gifts are distributed from the bottom up in the hierarchy, from the poor to the rich, from giftgivers to exchangers, while it looks as if the flow is going in the other direction.

The interaction of exchange itself has seemed so natural that it would not require investigation. However, it is actually artificial, deriving from a misuse of co-munication. If we no longer consider exchange natural or one of the mainstays of reality, we can stop considering our participation in it as the criterion of our worth. In fact, many women have believed that the purpose of our liberation has been to allow us to participate more fully in society. In the US, this society is capitalist patriarchy. Women have also felt discomfort in it because our values are different, and at times this keeps us from being successful. The answer to our problem is not to change ourselves to adapt to the bigger patriarchal picture, but to change the bigger picture to adapt to women's values. This change requires asserting those values as more viable than the values of patriarchy. We must understand and deeply criticize patriarchy, so that we can realize we already have the alternative in our hands.

Rather than attempting to achieve the respect of those who have succeeded in the system, we need to stand our ground outside the system. Even 're-spect' has to do with looking again, evaluating and being equal to, which are criteria deriving from exchange, and are important only when caring is not already considered the norm.

As we shift our focus towards validating the gift paradigm and seeing the defects of the exchange paradigm, many things acquire a different appearance: Patriarchal capitalism, which seemed to be the source of our good, is revealed as a parasitic system, where those above are nurtured by the free gifts of their 'hosts' below. Profit is a free gift given to the exchanger by the other participants in the market and those who nurture them. Scarcity is necessary for the functioning of the system of exchange and is not just an unfortunate result of human inadequacy and natural calamity.

1 In looking at the surface of language I question the psychological significance of terms used by philosophers and linguists, especially those having to do with giftgiving and need such as genetic 'endowment' or popular economic terms like 'haves' and 'have-nots.' They are clues to patriarchal psycho-social hidden agendas.

2 It would be interesting to look at anorexia as a refusal not only of food but of the value that would have been transmitted to the receiver through the reception of nurturing. Perhaps the anorexic takes on the exchange paradigm too profoundly or too soon.

3 World-wide, 19 billion dollars is spent on armaments every week. This would be enough to feed all the hungry on earth. Since this expenditure does not create any life-sustaining products, it acts as a drain on the nurturing economy. For a clear view of military expenditures see graphic on page 421-422.

Chapter 2

Language and Giving

Since we use language throughout our daily lives, and much of our thought takes place in language, it seems obvious that it would have a strong effect on us--not only as a process or instrument, but as a model. Language also has the power of having come from others, from the many. It is a deep connection that we have with other people in our society. It is an important part of our socialization as children.

The fact that all human societies have languages does not have to imply that language is genetically based. There is something else that all societies have in common: the caregiving done by mothers. This social constant does not depend so much upon the biological nature of mothers as upon that of children, who are born completely dependent. If someone does not take care of their needs, they will suffer and die. The

satisfaction of their needs must also take place without exchange, because infants cannot give back an equivalent of what they receive.

Their caregivers are thus forced into what we might call a kind of functional altruism. Society usually interprets the biological abilities of women--such as pregnancy, birthing, and lactation--to assign the role of mother and caregiver to women. Girls are brought up with the values that allow them to act in the other-oriented ways necessary for that role.

If we look at co-munication as the material nurturing or free giftgiving that forms the community, we can see the nurturing that women do as the basis of the community of the family unit. The nuclear family, especially the relation between mother and children, is just a vestige of what a community based on widespread giftgiving may have been at some time in the past, or could become in the future. The isolation of pockets of community from each other keeps the gift model weak, while the scarcity in which most of us are forced to live makes giftgiving difficult, even self-sacrificial and, therefore, 'unrealistic.'

While material nurturing is made difficult by scarcity, there is one thing of which we have an unlimited abundance, for which almost all of us possess the 'means of production.' That unlimited supply is language, with which we are able to produce ever-new sentences. Our vocabularies are finite, though almost infinitely re-combinable. We receive words and sentences free from other people and give them to others without payment. Language functions as a sort of free gift economy.¹ We do not recognize it as such, because we do not validate giftgiving in our economic lives and, in fact, we usually recognize the existence of nurturing specifically only in the mother-child relation. It, therefore, does not occur to us to use giftgiving as a term of comparison for language. With language, we create the human bonds that we have stopped creating through material co-munication. Language gives us an experience of nurturing each other in abundance, which we no longer have--or do not yet have--on the material plane.

This idea has led me to think that, if language is what made humans evolve, perhaps it is the giftgiving-in-abundance aspect, not the abstract system, that made the difference. If we were able to reinstate a material giftgiving community, perhaps we would evolve again, as New Agers and many others hope. In fact, I believe it is the exchange economy itself that is impeding our evolution.

The logic of mothering requires that the nurturer give attention to the needs of the other person. The reward for this behavior is the well-being of the other. There are many different kinds of needs, and it is sometimes a challenge to understand and provide for them. Giving and receiving in an on-going way create expectations and rewards, a knowledge of the other and of the good that satisfies the need, a commitment to further caring, and an expectation that it will occur--an on-going relationship. Each participant is somewhat altered by the experience.

Even when material goods are not available or not being used, a need for bonding with the other person may still arise. I would call this a communicative need, a need to bond, a

need for the relationship. Words are the social verbal items that have been devised to satisfy communicative needs. Since we use words to satisfy communicative needs regarding something, we can consider words as gifts. The mother first nurtures her child with goods and services, but she also nurtures her with words. The child is actually able to participate in turn-taking with the mother, verbally giving her communicative gifts before she is able to give her material gifts.²

Words as Gifts

A question arises here about the materiality of the verbal gift. Although we can identify a word as a repeatable sound unit, and it shares this character with other words, it can only be used for satisfying communicative needs, not for satisfying material needs directly. The word 'bread' does not satisfy the need to eat. However, communicative needs can sometimes be indirectly functional to the satisfaction of material needs. For example, 'There is bread in the cupboard' can be seen as a service that helps someone to satisfy her material need for bread. Saying the word 'bread!' as a request satisfies the listener's need to know what we want. We could consider the lexicon as a collection of gifts satisfying different communicative needs. Each word is a sequence of phonemes, a program of vocal behaviors which may be identified by the communicative need, or needs, it satisfies.

Boiling an egg is a sequence of behaviors having to do with various material objects, which satisfies the need to eat a cooked egg. Saying the word 'egg' is a series of vocal behaviors which satisfies a communicative need, establishing a relation with others regarding an egg or eggs. The ability to give information derives from the specification of experience through the use of these word-gifts, because the relation established is not only to the words themselves, but to things on other levels of reality, as well. The ability to receive information based on the use of words gives those words a value in the satisfaction of material needs, as well as in the satisfaction of communicative needs.

Whether we should consider word-gifts as goods or as services is something like the question whether light is made up of particles or waves. The kinds of communicative needs the word-gifts satisfy have proliferated to make use of them, much as the eye and the visual cortex have developed on our planet to make use of the light. It is useful also to consider the materiality of words as somewhere between goods and services, because the gifts on the nonverbal plane which they re-present, may also be of varying degrees of materiality.

From loving to the color green, from the moon to capitalism, all kinds of nonverbal things are re-presented by verbal things, creating verbal co-munication, and the formation of linguistic, and sometimes of material co-munities.³ Just as material giftgiving-and-receiving of goods forms the physical bodies of the people in the community, verbal giftgiving-and-receiving contributes to their formation as social subjects, with psychological identities.

Relationship

Giving and receiving word-gifts organized in sentences and discourses creates a human relation among people with regard to things in the world. Communicative need is the need for the relation to others with regard to something. We cannot ourselves make the other person relate herself to something. However, we can interpret her lack of a relation as a need for a means to that relation, and we can satisfy that need--with a word-gift. The need arises from the circumstances in which people find themselves, to talk about something. One person gives to the other word-gifts which re-present (give again) the pertinent parts of the world. We are social beings, and language allows us to include others in experiencing the world with us.

If I say, 'Look at the sunset,' I satisfy the need of the listener to know the sunset is happening, and to know that I think it is something worth looking at. By providing her with these words (which she already knows) in the present, I satisfy her need for a momentary relation to me and to the sunset, which is the same as my need for a relation to her and the sunset. Presumably, I would already be perceiving the sunset, so the motivation of my speech would be to include the other person in that experience, satisfying what I understand as her need to be put in that relation. The word 'sunset' has been supplied by the society in general to everyone, as a word-gift which can be used to satisfy communicative needs about sunsets.

The listener's creative reception of that word-gift places her in an inclusive human relation with me and, at the same time, draws her attention to the sunset, so that we can include each other, not only with regard to the words, but by relating ourselves in similar ways through our attention to a shared nonverbal experience. The relation to the nonverbal experience is also to some extent a gift, which we usually call 'information.' While looking at a sunset together can be a positive experience for both participants and, therefore, a need-satisfying aesthetic experience, there are many pieces of information which seem decidedly negative.

For example, 'I hate you' creates a common relation between us to my negative emotion towards you. This emotion is certainly not itself a gift to you, but it is useful to you to know that I have it and, thus, my phrase could be considered a gift or service in spite of its negativity. I believe there are many levels of gifts in life, as in language, but they have been hidden from us, because we have not been looking at them. We can say positive things to each other and nurture each other in that way, but even when we say things that are negative or neutral, the listener has many ways of receiving what has been given to her, transforming them into gifts by her creative use of them.

The phrase by Karl Marx that I have used on the frontispiece of this book, "language is practical consciousness that exists also for other men and for that reason alone it really exists personally for me as well," identifies a logic of other-orientation as the logic of communication. It also brings up the second grail question, "Whom does the Grail serve?" or in simpler terms, "Who is it for?" This question, always pertinent to giftgiving, often remains unasked and unanswered in our profit-based society.

General and Particular Processes

One aspect of communication through language is that it narrows down the range of possible experience at the moment to a shared present which, of course, may include mention of other times and places, as well. It often provides a theme or story line around which we can organize our behavior, revisit and interpret our experience together. The story line, and the topics of our conversations, are also gifts of common ground from which our diverse subjectivities grow.

I believe the way language works is by combining constant and general items in particular and contingent ways. We can identify the constant and general items by taking them out of the flow of speech in naming and definition. Their generality is in evidence when they stand 'alone' in this way. 'Dogs are four-legged tail wagers that bark' lets us consider dogs in general and the word 'dogs' in its generality. However, it is the use of words by the many in innumerable combinations in particular sentences that gives them their generality. Words are the common products of the collective, but so are general communicative needs.

When any 'thing' becomes pertinent or valuable enough to the many, so that people often need to form inclusive relations with each other in its regard, a word arises socially to fill that need. If the need to form the inclusive relations is only contingent and fleeting, we satisfy it by creating a sentence--combining words that satisfy needs regarding the constant aspects of the thing or topic. A contingent and fleeting communicative need can arise regarding any part of on-going experience.

In 'After the storm, the sun made the water drops sparkle,' a contingent communicative need for a relation with others regarding a particular transitory situation is satisfied by combining words, which are also used elsewhere in other sentences regarding other contingent situations. The elements of those situations are relevant to the society of verbal communicators repeatedly, so that a common need arises for a verbal gift that can be given for them, and a constant word arises to satisfy the need.⁴ A single word can also be used to satisfy needs regarding different kinds of things in homonymy. One kind of 'thing' can become related to different words in synonymy.

Needs build upon each other, and communicative needs can arise with regard to verbal as well as to nonverbal contexts. If the situation giving rise to a contingent communicative need is complex, we can put together a discourse by combining sentences, which we use to satisfy a variety of contingent communicative needs regarding that situation. Sentences work together in discourses to bring forward a common topic and to satisfy a variety of communicative needs arising in its regard.

Giftgiving is the Ur-logic

Linguists and philosophers have sometimes thought of explaining language in terms of underlying logical structures--either a simpler language, which would still not explain how language itself works, or some other elementary structure or process. One such

process was that of cause and effect. It was thought that it might be possible to reduce subject-verb-object structures to an underlying cause-and-effect structure. One example that was often used was 'John killed Mary,' which was given a 'translation' in cause-and-effect terms: 'John caused Mary to die.' I am often horrified at the (probably unconscious) hostility to women that can be found in linguists' examples. Perhaps it is evidence of the guilt they feel in denying the mothering paradigm (Mary?) as an explanation for language. Cause-and-effect was found by most linguists not to be an appropriate process to which to reduce language, perhaps because it is not informative enough. It certainly does not carry with it the human relational consequences that giftgiving does.

I am proposing giftgiving as the logical process to which to reduce language. Not only can words be seen as need-satisfying gifts, but the syntactic structure of subject, predicate, object can be seen as deriving from giver, gift (or service), receiver. For example, in 'The girl hit the ball,' 'girl' is the giver, 'hit' is the gift, 'ball' is the receiver. The 'translation' would be, 'The girl gave a hit to the ball.'

The intentionality of giftgiving can be found in many human actions and in the intentionality of speaking. A sense of motion and completeness which comes to us from a simple transitive sentence is similar to the motion and completeness that take place in giftgiving. In fact, giftgiving is transitive, a motion of something from one place or person to another. In the passive sentence 'The ball was hit by the girl,' emphasis is placed on the receiver rather than the giver of the gift.

Mothering is the necessary social process in the beginning of life, and this is also the time in which language learning takes place. Mothering is a cultural universal, required by the biology not of adults, but of infants. To each different culture, mothering must appear simply part of the nature of things but, for the mothers, the need to nurture is social and its accomplishment is intentional. Women's ability to give milk is a biological advantage that makes caretaking more convenient, but they must do the caretaking in a cultural context within social parameters. In mothering, there is an intentional transfer of goods and services from adult to child, from giver to receiver.

This experience is fundamental for children, because their lives depend upon it, and it is important and formative for the caretakers as well--if nothing else, because it is enormously time-consuming. It is not surprising that half of humanity is socialized from birth to do caretaking, because it requires a great deal of attention and commitment. A recent book, *The Language Instinct*, by Steven Pinker,⁵ attributes our linguistic capacity to a biological endowment. Similarly, mothering was considered instinctual until recently. In both cases, the logic of the gift is what is being covered by denial. The caretaking situation is more fundamental than the condition of objectivity. The experience of free gifts given by the mother and received by the child is more basic to the human being than is the knowledge of cause and effect. The mother is the giver--her care is the gift or service--and the child is the receiver. This process is laid down when the child is learning language in alignment with a syntactic structure of subject (giver), predicate (gift), object (receiver).⁶ If words are verbal gifts that satisfy constant social communicative needs, in the structure of an interpersonal speech situation, the speaker

would be the giver, the words and sentences the gifts, and the listener the receiver. Sentences are combinations of words, satisfying contingent communicative needs. It would not be far-fetched to think that the word combination process might also take place according to the logic of the gift. The hypothesis that language is based on giftgiving and receiving allows us to look at many different levels at which they may occur, so that aspects of language which seem to be mysterious can be explained as elements of a gift process at some level. First, there is the level of material co-munication--the mother gives gifts or services to the child. Second, there is verbal communication--the mother talks to the child.⁷ Third, words are social gifts, each satisfying a constant communicative need. Fourth, words are combined into sentences, which satisfy contingent communicative needs. Fifth, the message and the topic may also be considered gifts, as when we satisfy someone's need to know something or to talk about something. Sixth, at the level of syntax (within the sentence), the relation between subject, predicate and object re-traces the relation between giver, gift, and receiver.

It is important to look at this as a syntactic relation taking place at the level of words themselves, because at the level of things the words re-present, the 'gift' may be negative, as in 'The boy hit the girl,' or even 'John killed Mary' (translation: 'John gave death to Mary'). At the level of material communication, such violence is contradictory and harmful, causing more grievous needs rather than satisfying needs. Nonetheless, at the level of sentence structure, the gift process can function independently from the level of experience. Thus, 'The girl hit the ball,' 'Mother made a cake' and 'John killed Mary' all have the same giver, gift, receiver sentence structure though on the level of reality, they are very different events.

At the syntactic level, we can also look at the relations between adjectives and nouns, adverbs and verbs, as relations between gifts and receivers. In 'The brown dog ran fast to the gate,' 'brown' is given to 'dog' and 'fast' to 'ran.' Philosophers used to say 'brown' was a 'property' of the dog, and fast would be a 'property' of its running. Brown can be called a 'property' because . . . it is given to the dog. This happens by allowing the word 'brown' to modify the word 'dog,' joining them as transposed gift and receiver in order to satisfy a contingent communicative need, arising from a dog of that color.

Linguists are used to following a mathematical, algebraic or scientific model, not a life model--but they still talk about words 'filling the slots' of other words in a phrase. We could look at the 'slots' as needs and the words as gifts satisfying them. If a word can only be related to a specific kind of other words (for instance, a determiner like 'the' can only be related to nouns), it is a kind of gift that can be given only to a certain kind of receiver. Only that kind of receiver has a need ('slot') for it. Some words or groups of words have to attach themselves to others; they cannot give their gifts alone, but serve or are served by another group.

For example, 'to the gate' has to serve; it cannot stand alone. It is not itself a gift transaction, or even a giver, but a gift to a gift. If bonds are formed between the receiver and the gift, perhaps we attribute the same process to our words. 'Brown' is given to 'dog'

by the speaker for the moment, satisfying the communicative need arising from a brown dog. 'Dog' receives the gift of 'brown' and bonds with it for the present.

Transparency and Giving-Way

Gifts are given at the verbal level, which interpret 'reality' by re-presenting it in terms of giftgiving, but they are actually transparent to experience. In our example, they are transparent to the dog's being brown (it had that color), bringing it forward as part of an experience or topic the interlocutors can share.⁸ The transparency of the gift structure recalls another characteristic of giftgiving--the giver gives-way, self-effacing in order to give value to the receiver. We may, therefore, notice only that what we say is a gift--as when some information that we transmit is understood and used by the listener. We do not notice that the way we say it is a gift process at many levels.

At the 'reality' level, things which could have been gifts in co-munication give way to the word-gifts which take their place. They graciously stand aside and let words take over. In fact, their lack of competitiveness makes us forget that many of them never could have been actually transferred from one person to another anyway. Abstract ideas, huge material objects, creatures of fantasy, subjective states, etc. all stand aside with equal equanimity, allowing their places to be taken and giving value to the words that take their places.

At another level, the emotions that accompany our speech, or sometimes the very act of speaking to others, may also be said to nurture them, creating bonds. However, we do not usually notice gift structures in language because, in fact, they also stand aside; they give way in order to give value to what is being said and to the listener, the receiver of the verbal gifts. Another reason we do not usually see gift structures is that they are different from definition-exchange structures, and their levels are usually not formed the same way. Definition structures overtake gift structures like military facilities built on women's sacred springs.

The interpretative capacity of giftgiving has been denied and overtaken by viewing interpretation as a kind of 'penetration' by the mind. Phrases such as 'the way words are hooked on to the world' and even 'filling the slots' suggest metaphors of male sexuality.⁹ Instead, from a mother-based feminist point of view, we can see the relation between words and the world as the relation among gifts at different levels, where reality itself is a gift, all the way from sense 'data' to experiential givens. The world is made accessible to humans by the gifts of language at many different levels resulting in the sending of messages, the transmission of ideas and information, and the handing-down of culture. In fact, from this point of view, we could call our species, not homo sapiens, but homo donans. Giftgiving and receiving are prior to and necessary for our human way of knowing. They are the basis of a universal 'grammar,' not only of language, but of life.

Transitivity

Still another level at which we can see giftgiving is that of logical transitivity. The syllogism upon which the discipline of logic was founded "If 'A' then 'B,' and if 'B' then 'C,' if 'A' then 'C' could be seen as the transposition of the transitivity of the gift: "If 'A' gives to 'B,' and 'B' gives to 'C,' then 'A' gives to 'C.'" Logic, like language, could thus be seen as deriving from mothering, not from the capacity for abstraction. Logical connectors (articles, prepositions, parts of speech, prefixes, suffixes) alter the kinds of gifts that words are, being given to them and becoming attached to them from time to time in various ways. The answers to questions about 'how,' 'where,' 'when,' etc. satisfy communicative needs that grow up around the capacity to give and receive itself.

When an experience being described is not a complete gift transaction, we may nevertheless use the gift structure to give our message to the listener: 'The brown dog ran fast to the gate' is 'intransitive.' The dog is only given ostensively; it 'presents (gives) that behavior' to us to perceive. The additional information given by 'to the gate' increases the useful character of the sentence by saying where the running behavior was directed. 'To the gate' serves 'ran' by giving it a location, making it more specific.

Patriarchy has assigned 'activity and creativity' to men and 'passivity and receptivity' to women, because it has been blind to the creativity of giftgiving and of receiving. Both giftgiving and receiving are creative. The use of what has been given to us is necessary to make what has been given into a gift. If we do not use it, it is wasted, lifeless. The fact that the capacity to receive is as important as the capacity to give is manifested in our ability to transform sentences from active to passive and from passive to active. Moreover, the receiver in one moment can become the giver in the next, passing the gift along: 'The girl hit the ball, which hit the window.'

The speaker herself could be considered the receiver of an experience, which she is transmitting again to the listener. Perhaps the speaker might be considered as the middle term in a gift transaction, 'A gives to B, and B gives to C.' The speaker (B), by describing an event, passes on to another (C) the gift that has been given to her by life, by 'the way things are,' reality (A). She gives a gift which also involves her own creative receptivity: she has already necessarily selected some of the features of her experience as more important than others. Her re-presentation gives value to the elements she has selected.

The listener too will emphasize some of the elements in what she has been given. She actively collaborates in the creation of the product she receives. The stereotyping of gender and the emphasis on exchange in our society make it seem as if there is a great deal of (male) human activity which is not a gift, not need-directed. Reinstating the gift paradigm to its central place in the group of interpretative registers through which we address the world, lets us see that most human 'activity' is oriented towards the satisfaction of a need at some level. Language consequently appears, not as a mechanical concatenation of (verbal) activities, but as a collection of gifts and of ways of giving and receiving, in alignment with communicative needs, which arise from experience and proliferate at many levels, given that there are abundant means available for their satisfaction.

1 Many of the words we use to talk about language are gift words: 'attribute' a property, 'convey' a meaning, a message, 'transmit' information. Language, the collective means of expression, has been talking about itself, but we have not been paying attention because we have been listening to patriarchy. Language was not saying what we expected it to say. Instead we have looked at it according to a postal metaphor the packaging or encoding of information, sending and then unpacking or decoding it. I think the postal metaphor is just a way of keeping the gift under wraps.

2 We look at the world through the glasses of exchange so we may tend to see turn-taking as exchange. The motivation in turn-taking is not constrained reciprocity, but sharing, alternating giving and receiving, and communication.

3 The O.E.D. says that the word 'thing' derives from the old Norwegian word for 'court' which to me implies a collective judgment about the value of cultural items. I feel justified in thinking of both words and nonverbal things of varying degrees and kinds of materiality, in terms of a collective judgment about their value.

4 The needs that give rise to idiomatic expressions can be seen as somewhere between the constancy of the word and the contingency of the sentence.

5 Steven Pinker, *The Language Instinct*, Penguin Books, London, 1994.

6 The fact that there is variation in the ways these functions are expressed in different languages in word order and syntax does not undermine the hypothesis that giving and receiving could constitute universal behavioral structures from which they are derived.

7 There is a great deal of nonverbal communication as well which occupies a spectrum between material nurturing and language. However it is the more abstract end of the spectrum language, that needs to be understood first in order to see nonverbal communication in its light.

8 Similarly 'the sick woman' attributes sickness to a woman according to a gift structure, creating a shareable topic though sickness is not a gift to be shared.

9 Gifts, whether verbal or nonverbal, are not arbitrary, in that they are given to satisfy needs and to create relations. However, the substitute gifts do not have to look or sound like the originals.

Chapter 3

Reciprocity

The logics of giving and of exchange contradict each other, but the one is also built upon the other. Exchange is a constrained double gift in that the receiver must give back to the

giver an equivalent of what she has received. The product of one person takes the place of the product of the other. I believe that this requirement of equivalence and place-taking is a derivative of naming, where the verbal gift takes the place of the nonverbal gift, and of definition, where some verbal gifts take the place of other verbal gifts. In exchange, which operates on the material plane, a return 'gift' takes the place of one's own, and may seem to serve, as the verbal substitute gift would, to create a bond between the exchangers.

The road to hell is paved with good intentions however, and acquiring the equivalent return 'gift' becomes the whole motivation of the first 'gift.' Transforming the gift process into an equal exchange, erases the other-orientation of both exchangers making their equality only the equality of their self interests. Exchange becomes a kind of magnetic template around which our society organizes itself. Our thinking gravitates towards it, giving it a great deal of credit, perhaps because of its similarity with naming and definition (the linguistic processes from which it derives and which we continue to use). Giftgiving continues unabated, but remains invisible and does not become generalized as a model which is validated by having conscious followers. In fact, the gift paradigm gives-way: it does not compete with the exchange paradigm. It is thus in the situation of giving value and giving many gifts to exchange. Exchange is self-reflecting and therefore self-validating. It has a symmetrical form and the requirement of equivalence between the products subverts the focus on the need of the other. Because exchange is based upon and promotes the self-interest of both exchangers, there is an equality not only in the products but also in the motivation of the persons involved.

As instances of equality, the two are then again equal to each other and a hall-of-mirrors effect begins, which is again equal to that effect in all the other exchanges taking place--for instance, in the market. The processes of substitution and equivalence in language also resonate with and confirm the derivative processes in the market, giving the hall-of-mirrors many abstract reflections.

The abstract need for equations, which is set up by the process of exchange in function of the self-interest of each of the exchangers, acquires an independence, a sort of life of its own. Anything that can be substituted by an equivalent appears to be a value (an exchange value), whether or not it is directed towards someone's need. I believe that the over-emphasis on the equation, while ignoring giftgiving, is the source of the idea that there is much human activity which is not need directed. The abstract needs of the process of exchange are not considered needs but part of 'the way things are.' However, satisfying them becomes more important than satisfying human needs, and the exchange process takes over from giftgiving, seeming to be the source of 'human' values. Thus we have the inhuman and inhumane market-driving category of 'effective demand.'

Because exchange requires an equation, which is equal to other equations on the market and elsewhere, it brings with it a sort of built-in meta level, which allows it to self-propagate and to remain in evidence in the foreground. At the same time, giftgiving (which only requires an imitator in order to serve as a model) is pushed into the background and made invisible, even though it continues to be practiced in many ways.

In fact, exchange is parasitically embedded in a wider process of giftgiving, which actually gives to the process of exchange, allowing it to continue to prevail. Exchange itself becomes the 'other' of giftgiving.

The generality of giftgiving is captured by its being practiced on exchange; then it is redefined as an inferior or failed exchange. It appears to be a special case of incomplete one-sided exchange which cannot exist on its own. The logic and practice of exchange are parasitic upon the logic and practice of giftgiving, however. The gifts they receive help them dominate the lives and the world views of both those who practice exchange and those who practice giftgiving.

There is an upward flow of gifts, against gravity, towards the superior positions in patriarchal hierarchies and away from needs. The presence together of many of these gift-exchange hierarchies, which bolster each other by their similarity and sometimes by service is called 'social reproduction.' The hall-of-mirrors creates abundant images of the same structures--and thus once again looks similar to language--but we are led by the reflecting equation to take the cue for understanding the world from the aspect of the propagation of similar one-many images instead of from the gift aspect of language.

Perhaps it is because of similar structures at different levels that the parasitic exchange paradigm is elevated to the level of a self-perpetuating system with a 'mind' of its own. If these processes are functional in the formation of our individual minds--conscious vs. subconscious for example--perhaps they are also forming the same patterns on a very large social scale.

The self-perpetuation is facilitated by the confirmation of finding or creating self-similar images at different levels. I look at such similarities between patriarchal structures at different levels not as analogies, historical isomorphisms or homologies, but as self-similar social patterns created by the reciprocal feedback of the form of the definition into the definition of gender (and vice versa, the definition of gender into the form of the definition) at many different levels.

The idea of self-similarity was developed by Benoit Mandelbrot in the study of fractal geometry, where he found that the same patterns were repeated at widely different levels or 'scales.' The cauliflower is the common example: each flower and piece of each flower looks like the whole head.²

I think the same thing happens in society in what we call 'social structures.' In fractals, the patterns are created by feeding the result of an equation back into the equation millions of times. Socially, we are doing the same thing feeding back the definition into itself endlessly and thus we are actually creating the same patterns at different levels.

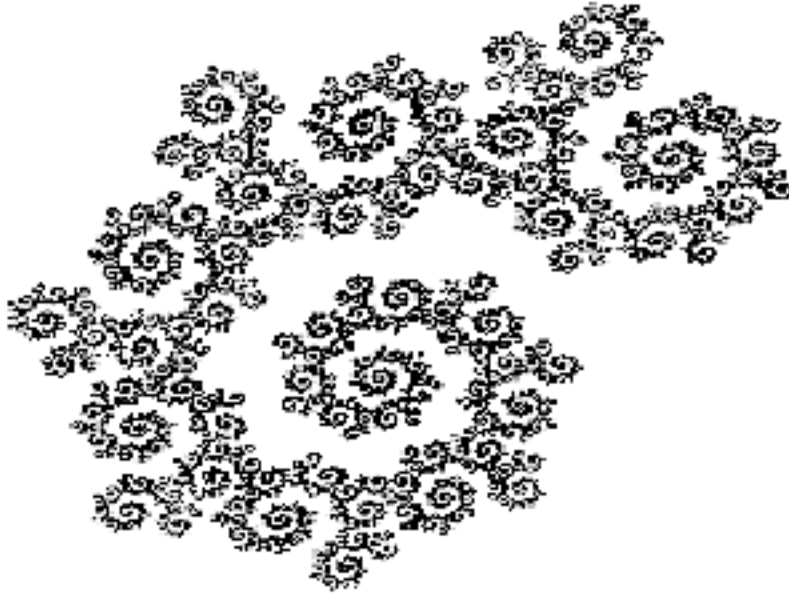


Figure 1. A fractal image is generated by feeding back the results of an equation into the equation millions of times. Copyright © Clifford Pickover; reprint of graphic with permission. From *Fractal Horizons: The Future of Fractals* by Clifford Pickover and J. C. Sprott, 1996. This book is a clear recent discussion of fractals.

Is Reciprocity Exchange or Turn-Taking?

Homo economicus, the protagonist of neo-classical economics, is made in the image of exchange. Even the word homo, meaning 'the same,' brings with it the idea of an equation. We educate our boys to be similar units of masculinity and then to vie with one another for economic and symbolic superiority. We educate our girls to nurture this process and to bring up their children in its image. This has the effect that in the 'free market' (an oxymoron) society more males can be found in the practice of exchange, while more females can still be found practicing giftgiving.

Our economic systems are based on exchange and our study of them, economics, is based on exchange as well. Capitalism itself practices the values of masculinity and masculinity the values of capitalism. Since these are social roles, they can also be practiced by persons of the other biological sex. However, this may be rendered more difficult because the social interpretation of genders creates many impediments against the success of one gender in areas usually occupied by the other. One of these areas is economics, the academic discipline that studies capitalism.

Because the study of the production and distribution of goods in our society is based upon and directed towards self-validating exchange, it does not consider giftgiving as 'economic.' Yet giftgiving is indeed the production and distribution of goods. The micro-economics of a different (gift-based) macroeconomic system takes place in every household. Women's un-monetized gift labor has been invisible to economists until recently because those who were practicing the values of exchange were the only ones studying it.

Now some women economists, who like other women have been socialized towards mothering and the practices of giftgiving, are applying gift values to the study of exchange and to their profession and are experiencing a great deal of healthy cognitive dissonance. However, they have not yet begun to question the validity of the exchange paradigm itself as a world view, perhaps because they are still more or less successfully operating within it.³

It is easier for those who are at least partly outside the exchange logic to identify and promote giftgiving as a socially relevant paradigm--indeed as the solution to the problems being caused by exchange. This 'revolutionary vanguard' would include not only women, housewives and mothers (whether or not they do monetized labor), but all those who do not make profit from exchange and instead are unconsciously giving to it--the male and female 'hosts' of the parasite.

Most of us are still blinded to giftgiving by the internalization of the self-reflecting logic of exchange. Even while we are practicing it, we do not 're-cognize' giftgiving, think about it at a meta level or have a meta language with which to talk about it. We continue to think in exchange terms about our own culture, as well as about examples of institutionalized giftgiving in other cultures.

A recent school of thought in France, based upon the work of the anthropologist Marcel Mauss, devotes a great deal of attention to giftgiving, which it sees as composed of three moments: giving, receiving and giving back.⁴ The insistence upon reciprocity hides the communicative character of simple giving and receiving without reciprocity and does not allow this group to make a clear distinction between giftgiving and exchange as two opposing paradigms.

It seems to them that giftgiving is just a variation on exchange, with a longer pay back time and less emphasis upon equality. The bonds still seem to be caused by constrained reciprocity, rather than by the direct satisfaction of needs. Like most men, these investigators are limited in their thinking because they have not been socialized towards the adult experience of creating bonds directly through mothering. Giftgiving appears to be a curiosity, not the mother-based (mammalian) life logic or a program for social change.⁵

Years ago, French anthropologist Levi-Strauss's description of the symbolic 'exchange of women' among family groups⁶ inspired much further speculation in the exchange mode by anthropologists, psychoanalysts, linguists and semioticians. From the gift paradigm point of view, women are themselves the source of nurturing, so that the 'giving' of women is a gift of givers--a meta gift. The exchange (if it is constrained and seen through our capitalistic eyes) or turn-taking (if it is not) has a content which, in the case discussed by Levi-Strauss, is women, who are the source of giving.

Giving and receiving, rather than the constraint of reciprocity, is what causes bonding. The interaction of nurturing and receiving nurture (or nurturers) is the mutually creative

factor, not the imposition and following of the law, not the equivalence of exchange, nor the constraint of reciprocity. In societies which are less deeply etched by exchange than our own, gift practices (gift cycles) serve definitional purposes, defining relationships among the members of the group. We might consider them descendants of language, of another lineage than exchange, but using the giving and receiving of gifts--communication--for the purposes of status. (See Figure 2. on Page 56.)

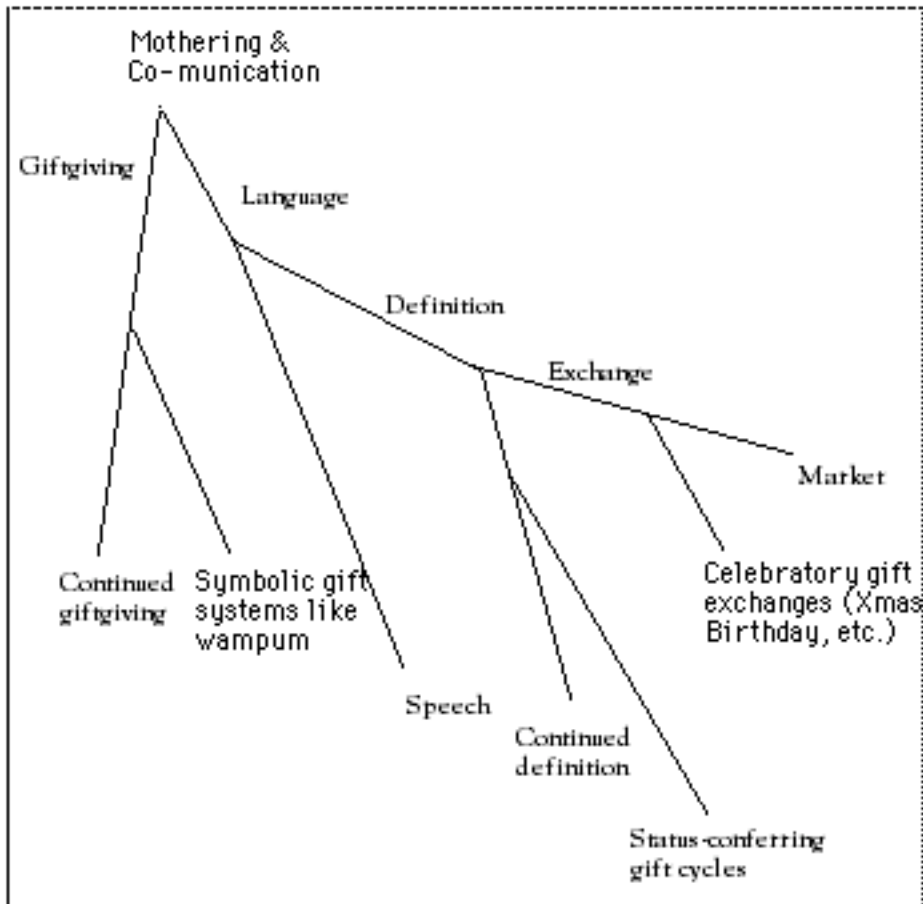


Figure 2. A

possible genealogy of co-munication through gifts, language and exchange.

Women are the Vanguard

Lewis Hyde, Jerry Martien and other writers on gift 'exchange' have done work⁷ which re-interprets historical and anthropological literature, at least partially liberating the idea of the gift from the constraints of capitalism. Perhaps because they have not had the experience of mothering, they tend to see the gift way as a poetic thing of the past, which has been forgotten, marginalized and covered over--much as their own experience of the gift way (with their mothers when they were children) has been covered over but still remains in the unconscious and in myths and stories. Continuing to see giftgiving in terms of reciprocity (that is, exchange) maintains the discourse within the parameters of the patriarchal status quo.

Women can more easily recognize the presence of giftgiving everywhere because we have an actual example of it in our adult practice of our social role (however socially disqualified and devalued that may be). That is why women are the vanguard, the carriers of giftgiving as a social program, a way of organizing society now and for the future.

The lack of a theory of language as giftgiving makes the understanding of giftgiving as a living principle more difficult. However, the discussion of money as a 'gift' and wampum as 'words' and 'speech acts' proposed by Martien is a bridge between language and material giftgiving (as was wampum itself). Martien lets us see that wampum was a means of material co-communication (interpreted by European settlers only as a 'primitive' kind of money). The strings of shell beads were sent from place to place to define situations and satisfy special needs for bonding, attention and care. For example, special beads were sent to those in mourning, to satisfy the need for consolation. Beads were given to create pacts and maintain promises among social groups. Wampum would appear to be a many-word material language, which went beyond definition to create solidarity and mutual inclusion, while money remains at that stage which names everything quantitatively in order to facilitate a more 'primitive' human relation of mutual exclusion--of having and not-having private property.

In our own lives, as well as in the investigation of other cultures, the question arises as to whether it is possible to follow and assert a clear model of giftgiving or whether, by focusing on giving back, any transaction becomes assimilated to the model of exchange. This is really a problem of the intersection of two logics; but it is often read as a moral question (we ask, "Is she really being altruistic, or is this just a hidden manipulation?"), which only clouds the picture and sometimes makes us pay for our acts of love with shame. We wryly comment, "No good deed ever goes unpunished." Self-interest appears to be the basic motivation of all humans, with scarcity as its natural complement. The good of the whole seems to be, after Adam Smith, the compendium of the self-interests of all, while orientation towards the other is unrealistic and self-sacrificial. Reciprocity is a way of maintaining the self-interest of both of the parties to the interaction.

The custom of giving back a bit extra, more than one has received, is a way of affirming the gift model--even when, through reciprocity, one is running the risk of being perceived as exchanging. However, this process has also been assimilated into exchange as interest on loans. In fact, lenders give their money in expectation of the extra gift of interest they will receive. (This kind of exchange has become so much the norm that an interest-less loan is now considered a gift).

Anthropologists, like the rest of us in patriarchy, have difficulty taking off the mirror glasses of the exchange paradigm. Thus they talk about 'gift exchange,' confusing the two modes from the beginning. Again giftgiving appears to be an under-developed version of exchange rather than a different and more viable method of organizing society. In so-called 'primitive' societies, giftgiving often has a symbolic function. I believe that is because, in imitation of language, as we just saw with wampum, special material substitute gifts (like verbal substitute gifts) are given in organized ways for the purpose of creating specific bonds among givers and receivers.

In other words, both the exchange of commodities for money and 'symbolic gift exchange' are variations on the theme of co-munication. They are two alternative uses of the intertwined patterns. In fact, both language and the production and distribution of material goods are found in all societies and have co-existed for millennia. Societies have learned to use their own processes in a variety of ways to create new processes of communication.

Language is a second (verbal) gift economy, while definition and naming are special de-contextualized processes of language. These processes evolve into exchange when they are transposed onto the material plane, as people substitute one product for another and equate them quantitatively.

The introduction of money provides a 'general equivalent,' a single substitute gift (like a word) in which the values of all the products on the market can be expressed and evaluated. While money provides an additional abstract element in the exchange process, it does not alter its basic logic. Thus barter is not a solution to the problems caused by exchange. Rather it is only an example of the same logic without money. By taking the distinction between giftgiving and exchange as the watershed between two basic paradigms of human interaction, we can clarify a number of different (seemingly unrelated) problems.

Many Gifts

We can understand many of the irrational and harmful aspects of patriarchal capitalism as a point of contact between the two paradigms. Surplus labor that portion of the workers' labor time that is unpaid and goes towards the profit of the capitalist can be considered as a gift under constraint, from the worker to the capitalist. The tendency to pay women less than men for comparable labor, can be interpreted as an attempt to maintain women in a giftgiving position, reinforcing our practice of the invisible gift model by making us give even more unpaid (gift) labor than our male co-workers do. Because of the equality of exchange and the value we attribute (give) to it, we are apt to give credit to the market as 'just' even when it is penalizing us (Father knows best).

Women's unpaid labor in the home has been calculated as some 40% of the Gross National Product. It is one of the most glaring examples of unrecognized gift labor that exists. Consider also the gifts that come to the rich from the poor, to the North from the South, to exchange-based economies from economies that are still to some extent gift-based. Differences in exchange rates, levels of life and self-sufficiency in the 'developing' countries permit a flow of gifts from them to the so-called 'developed' countries.

Not only is this flow not recognized as such, but it is actually read in the opposite direction so that the North appears to be giving loans, material aid, information, technology, markets, protection, even a 'civilizing influence' to the South, which becomes depleted and crippled trying to pay back the 'more,' the interest on what it has been

'given,' but which has actually served to stimulate more hidden gifts which drain away its capital.

For example, the lowering of the level of life in Third World countries serves the First World by lowering the price of labortransforming the differential of low-cost labor and raw materials into collective gifts from the many in the South through the few in the South to the few in the North. The manipulative use of giftgiving for the purpose of profit making (leveraging more gifts) is itself an exchange. However, misinterpreting giftgiving as an exchange and profit as 'deserved' confuses the two paradigms and is not just a bias of academicians. It is a very widespread view that is part of and supports the practice of exploitation.

The many examples of actual slavery that have poisoned human history are evidence of the tendency to place groups of people in constrained giftgiving positions through 'owning' them. Women of all races and cultures have also often been in these positions with regard to their husbands, whether or not they were actually 'owned.' In order to accumulate capital, surplus gifts must come from somewhere. Slavery provided that surplus 'free' to the slave 'owners' in the South of the US, for example, though it cost immense human suffering to the slaves.

But exchange also provides an efficient mechanism for accumulation, by hiding the gifts it receives behind the screen of an equation which appears to be 'fair,' and a transaction which appears to come from a 'free choice' (no matter that the absence of alternatives often reduces poor people to a situation similar to slavery). Capital can be seen as the combined gifts of the many captured by exchange and understood within exchange's self-reflecting parameters as coming from fair profit on an investment. Equal exchange does not produce a profit.

Gift labor is necessary for that purpose.⁸ Gift labor is easy to hide because, as we said regarding language, giving is transitive. If 'A' gives to 'B' and 'B' gives to 'C,' then 'A' gives to 'C.' Thus, if a wife gives her free labor to her husband and he gives his surplus labor to the capitalist, the wife's labor passes transitively through her husband to the capitalist. The gift is also unseen because we avert our gaze from the original source. At most we look at 'B' giving to 'C.' What is in full evidence, however, is the so-called 'equal' exchange between 'B' and 'C,' where the capitalist pays the worker a salary which is determined by the price of that kind of labor on the market.

Focusing on the salary as the 'just' price of labor draws our attention away from the quantifiable and unquantifiable giftgiving which is also taking place. Exchange validates itself and fits with the other exchanges which are occurring in the market. It floats like a cluster of bubbles on a sea of hidden gifts--given by women, workers, the unpaid, the underpaid, the poor, the unemployed (who with their demand for jobs keep the 'just' price of labor low), and all those in classes and countries which are in a giftgiving stance towards privileged classes and countries.

Then there are the many gifts of consumers who consistently overpay for products like gasoline, which have a relatively low production cost but a high utility to people whose needs have been determined by transportation industries. There are the gifts of the past, of the surplus value contained in 'fixed capital,' but also in (mostly women's) free gifts of maintenance of the buildings, goods, use values and people of previous generations--their children, their language, their art, their culture, and the by-products of their lives. There is a great unrecognized flow-through of gifts from the past to the present, as well as from people in groups and in countries in the giving stance to the countries in the taking stance. There are the gifts of nature ready for our use, air and water and sunlight, which we are adapted by evolution to creatively receive--but which are becoming polluted and scarified by being covertly expended, wasted, to cut costs (give gifts) in the service of the exchange paradigm. This pollution forces unborn generations to hand over to us their potential use of nature's gifts so that we can make a quick profit. We are blocking the flow of gifts towards the future. New types of commerce invade previously giftgiving areas, from fast food restaurants to laundromats. The inheritance of all is becoming commercialized by the industry of bio-genetics, turning even the (biological) free gifts of the many to the profit of the few.

1 A 'meta-language' is a language which talks about language. Terms such as 'noun,' or 'sentence' are part of the meta-language of grammar. The 'hall-of-mirrors' effect spawned by exchange makes all the other equations and reflecting structures in the society validate exchange. By their similarity to it they appear to say 'This is norm-al.' The self-reflecting focus warps our view by overemphasizing the exchange process and decontextualizing it taking it away from its context its other in giftgiving. In *Principia Mathematica*, Bertrand Russell discussed his theory of logical types where 'higher' logical levels are of a different type than the levels beneath them. For example, the class of all classes is a meta-class at a higher logical level than its members. Meta-messages are messages about messages and tell us how to interpret them. I believe that the hall-of-mirrors effect creates many meta-messages which keep our focus locked onto the exchange process. See also Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, Ballantine Books, New York, 1972. Bateson discussed the potential for resolving schizophrenogenic double binds by changing meta-messages. I believe the double binds are caused by concealed exchange motivations at the meta level. Recognizing giftgiving as the context in which exchange and classification are embedded could cause us to re-focus our economics and our logic, validating giftgiving.

2 For another useful explanation of fractal geometry and self-similarity see James Gleick, *Chaos, Making a New Science*, Penguin Books, New York, 1987.

3 The International Association for Feminist Economics (IAFFE).

4 See, for example, the work of Jacques Godbout, Serge Latouche and the review MAUSS, which is an acronym for Mouvement Anti-utilitariste des Sciences Sociales.

5 In an influential foreword to a re-edition of Marcel Mauss' *The Gift*, W. W. Norton, New York, 1990, Mary Douglass discusses exchange or reciprocity as the bond-creating

aspect of the gift. She refers to her experience in a foundation where she learned that "the recipient does not like the giver, however cheerful he be." She believes that free gifts should not be given because "refusing requital puts the act of giving outside any mutual ties." p. vii. Women too can be mesmerized by the exchange paradigm into believing that reciprocity, not the satisfaction of needs, is the source of human relations. I would just like to mention that there is great psychological distress around free giving and that charities often give paternalistically, demeaning the receivers another reason why the recipients may not have liked Douglass's "cheerful giver."

6 Claude Levi-Strauss, *Anthropologie Structurale*, Paris, Plon, 1958.

7 Lewis Hyde. *The Gift, Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property*. Random House, 1979, New York, and Jerry Martien, *Shell Game, a True Account of Beads in North America*, Mercury House, San Francisco, 1996.

8 Jack Weatherford, *Indian Givers*, Fawcett Columbine, New York, 1988, discusses the impact the gold and silver of the Americas had on European capitalism, along with the numberless other (unrecognized) gifts the native people gave to the rest of the world.