

# Toward a better understanding of gift-giving's meanings

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Cite as:

Cerio Eva (2019), Toward a better understanding of gift-giving's meanings.

*Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 48th, (8045)

Paper presented at the 48th Annual EMAC Conference, Hamburg, May 24-27, 2019.



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## **Abstract**

Marketing research on giving behaviour has overlooked gift-giving, even though this topic presents social, ecological and economic issues. Therefore, we conducted 16 interviews to better understanding gift-giving meanings, distinguishing three types of objects: ordinary products, basic necessities, and precious objects. Our results identify five major meanings: philanthropic giving, symbolic redistribution, symbolic transmission, material redistribution and calculated giving. They vary according to the orientation of the gift (for a personal purpose or simple generosity) and the value attributed to the gift-giving (intangible or tangible). This research also highlights the importance of distinguishing the object that has been donated, since gift-giving is not considering in the same way for the various identified objects. Finally, this study has strong managerial implications for charities by allowing them to understand donors' discourses according to three types of objects.

**Keywords:** *gift-giving behaviours; charities; non-profit marketing*

**Track:** Public Sector and Non-Profit Marketing