

In Pursuit of the Perfect Gift? It's a Lot Closer Than You Think

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The New York Times:

Traditionalists and etiquette mavens are complaining, but the rest of us can thank social scientists this season. They have come up with experimental evidence to support three revolutionary rules for people who hate shopping for holiday gifts:

1. You don't have to spend any time looking for "thoughtful" gifts.
2. You don't have to spend much money, either.
3. Actually, you may not have to spend any money.

Yes, I know this sounds too good to be true. I was skeptical, too, if only because it contradicts a previous holiday column of mine. After looking at anthropological research into the potlatch, and talking with a Kwakwaka'wakw Indian chief who carries on this gift-giving ritual in British Columbia, I concluded that lavish presents are essential to social harmony.

Read the whole story: [The New York Times](#)