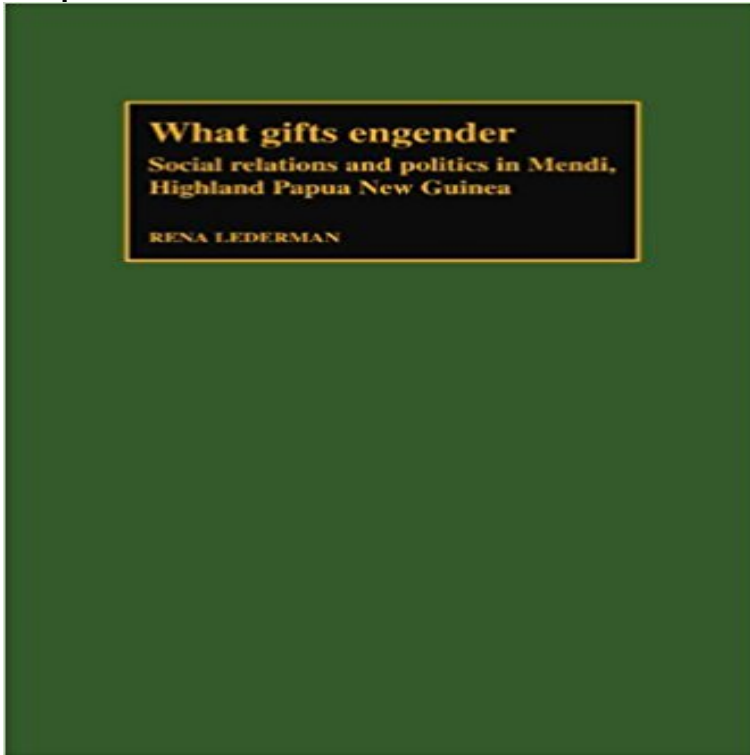


# What Gifts Engender: Social Relations and Politics in Mendi, Highland Papua New Guinea



Gift exchange plays a crucial role in the social and political organization of Mendi in Papua New Guinea. This book reveals how considerable light can be shed on Mendi society, particularly on its political economy, by examining both the well-known ceremonial exchange festivals and the hitherto relatively little-studied everyday gift-giving practices. The author shows that the latter are crucial for understanding inter-group politics, the process of leadership, male-female relationships and the status of women, and the production, distribution and circulation of wealth. Currently the only book available on this society, the work offers an unusual combination of a social structural analysis with a study of local history and change. It is also of interest for its integration of the study of gift exchange and politics with the study of gender roles and relationships.

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