

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores different lives of used clothing donated into charity clothing bins. Multi-sited ethnographic research makes visible the diverse lives of the collected material that vary substantially depending on the type of organization and the scale of their work, ranging from small non-profit organizations to large-scale recycling companies. The key practice is sorting which separates heterogeneous materiality into specific categories and transforms discards into gifts, commodities, materials for recycling or waste. However, these categories are far from being fixed or clear-cut, rather the value of the collected postconsumer material is continually being negotiated and is shifting dependent on the context.

Key words: second hand clothing, waste, materiality, bin, recycling, value, sorting, gift, commodity