

Future Shop



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In his attempt to take eBay into the realm of social theory, Nissanoff leans heavily on "temporary ownership," an endless cycle of consumption where each purchase is looked at not as an acquisition, but as a stopgap that will be auctioned off after its utility has been extracted, and the next bigger and better thing will be partially bankrolled with the proceeds won (at auction, naturally) from the last. It's sort of "One man's trash is another man's treasure," but substitute "used designer briefcase" for "trash." Nissanoff stresses buyers only purchase things that really excite them and carry a high resale value (big ticket swag from Chanel, Fendi, Rolex, Hermes and the like). "The money you recoup when you turn in your expensive stroller, for example, can be put into a new bike for your child." The book, however, ignores a large segment of society: poor and lower middle class people, many of whom don't have computers or

the means to buy a \$4,600 watch. Similarly, Nissanoff's model assumes people will want to spend the time and energy tracking auctions, bidding, hawking their own stuff and making endless trips to the post office to send off their used handbags. Though it has an exciting promise-people buy newer, bigger, better, shinier possessions all the time, so why not put them to work?-Nissanoff's theory is directed at too narrow a range of consumers to carry a revolutionary consumption wallop.

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